

Ye are not under the LAW but under GRACE.

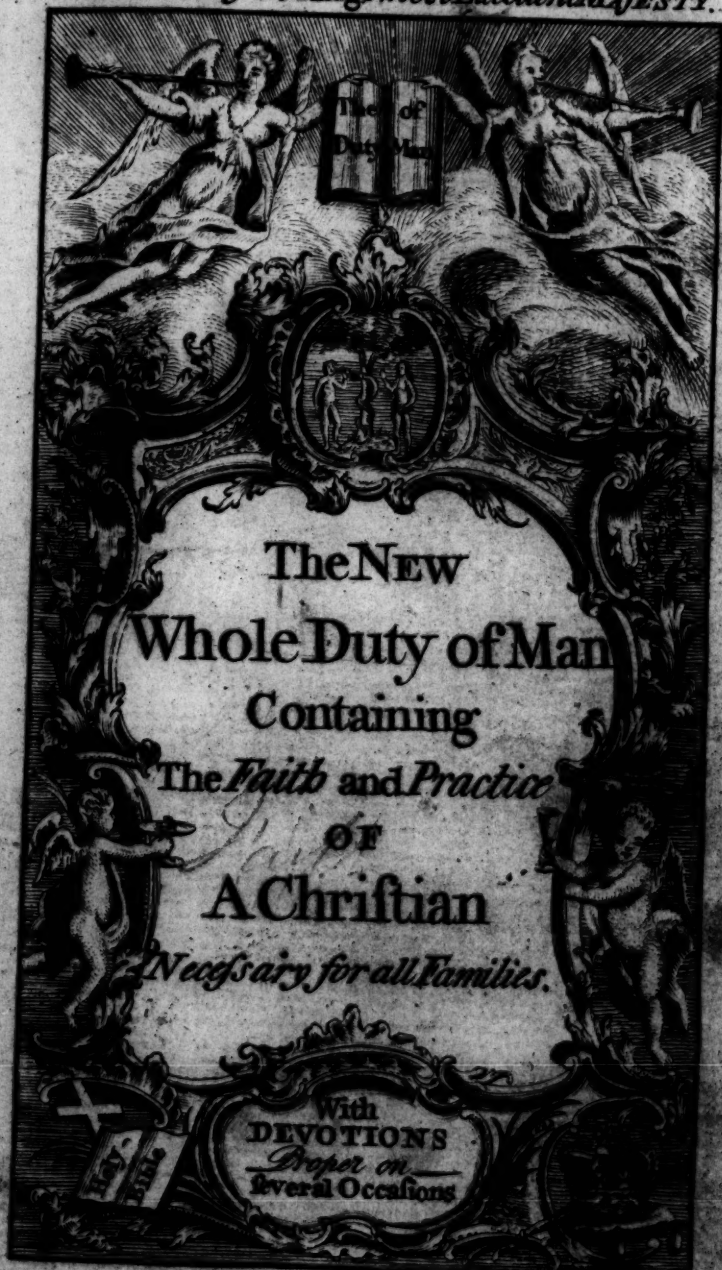
Rom: 6.16.



*The Law was given by Moses but Grace & Truth came by
Jesus Christ. That whosoever believeth in him should
not Perish but have eternal Life John 1.17. and 3.16.*

J. Wheatley Sculp.

Authorised by the King's most Excellent Majesty.



J. Wesley del.

1607/516.

The NEW
Whole Duty of Man:

CONTAINING

The *Faith* as well as *Practice*

OF

A Christian;

Made Easy

For the *Practice* of the *Present* Age,

As the OLD *Whole Duty of Man* was designed
for those *unhappy* Times in which it was written;

AND

Supplying the *Articles*

OF

The Christian Faith,

Which are wanting in that Book,

THO'

Essentially necessary to Salvation.

Necessary for All Families,

AND

Authorised by the KING's most Excellent MAJESTY.

With Devotions proper for several Occasions.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

D U B L I N:

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M.DCC.XLVI.



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date
during

T O T H E R E A D E R.

TH E following reasons, I hope, will justify me to a candid and considerate reader, for publishing this *New Whole Duty of Man*, and, I trust, they are also sufficient to remove any prejudices, that at first appearance may possibly be entertained against it. For,

It being now betwixt *four score* and a *hundred* years since the publication of the *OLD Whole Duty of Man*, it need not be matter of surprise to any, if the generality of readers begin to be little affected by that work.

The cause of which dislike is to be ascribed in a great measure, I presume, to the *distance* of those times in which that treatise was wrote; for not only the words but the manner of expression, and all the ways and methods of treating such subjects are, and ought to be, very different now from what they were formerly. And tho' I am far from denying that a vein of sound learning and *morality* is visible throughout that book, or that it was well adapted for those *unhappy* times of *strife* and *confusion* in which it was written; * yet all this lying under the forementioned disadvantages, it is apprehended the people of the *present age* are never like to be better reconciled to it. "The case in reality was this: During the times of confusion, many of the preachers (and writers) had not only forbore to inculcate the duties of morality, but had laboured to depreciate them; to persuade the people that *faith* was all, and *works* nothing. And therefore in order to take off those unhappy impressions, the clergy found themselves obliged to inculcate, with more than ordinary diligence, the necessity of *moral duties* in the christian life, and to labour to restore them to their proper share in the christian scheme." † Besides,

It is very evident, I think, that the *subjects* treated of in the *OLD Whole Duty of Man*, are by no means *so many*, nor all of them *so well chosen*, as they might be for the use and necessities of the *present age*; and, I believe, no considerate man can doubt that our CHURCH and RELIGION have another sort of enemies † to contend with now, than the *Solifdians* of *that time*, men whose shocking impieties and tenets strike at the very foundation of *christianity*. † Atheists, Deists, &c.

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itself;

* The *OLD Whole Duty of Man*, as appears by Dr. Hammond's Letter, dated *March 1657*, was first published in the grand rebellion, during the subversion of the constitution both in church and state.

† See the Bishop of London's 2d Pastoral Letter, page 64. 8vo.

itself; for which reason the *OLD Whole Duty of Man* (which, in opposition to the prevailing doctrine of those days, is chiefly confined to the *moral duties*) cannot by any means be well suited to the impious age we live in, when the *articles* of our *christian faith* are so impudently attacked and contemned; and whether the *OLD Whole Duty of Man*, which for near a century last past has been indiscriminately put into the hands, not only of the common people, but of many others, as a complete summary of our most holy religion, when at the same time the *articles* of the *christian faith* are quite omitted in it; I say, whether this has not in some degree contributed, during such a course of years, to produce that contempt which the *christian faith* now labours under, is submitted to the considerate and judicious part of mankind to determine.

Most certain it is, that the author of the *OLD Whole Duty of Man* himself, conscious it may be of the defects of that treatise, speaking in his *Lively Oracles* of those things we are to believe, says, "These are the excellencies of the doctrinal part of scripture, which also render them most aptly preparative for the precepts, and indeed so they were designed: the *Credenda* and the *Agenda* being such inseparable relations, that who ever parts them, forfeits the advantage of both." And as the *Duty of Man* was the first, and the *Lively Oracles* the last piece of that author, for so they are placed in his works, it may reasonably be presumed, the *Lively Oracles* was intended to supply the defects of the former, but the proprietors of those books, not thinking fit to print them together, the author's intention, if such it was, has been rendered of little effect.

But how fashionable soever it may be at this time of day, notwithstanding what may be taught in the *OLD Whole Duty of Man*, those men grossly impose upon themselves, who rest their acceptance with God upon the mere performance of the obligations of morality, and slight and ridicule the *christian religion*; I say, how foolishly such men deceive their own souls, is described with such clearness and energy by the late Archbishop SHARP, that I shall recite it in his own words.

"It is not enough (*says this judicious and orthodox divine*) to entitle any man to everlasting salvation, that he practiseth the duties of *natural religion*, unless he also believe and embrace that religion which God has revealed by JESUS CHRIST, supposing he has opportunities of coming to the knowledge of it. Bare morality or honesty of life, without a right FAITH, will not save a man's soul, supposing that the man hath opportunities of coming to the knowledge of that right FAITH: and this consideration I seriously address to all those among us, who think it so indifferent a matter what religion or what faith

To the R E A D E R.

faith they are of, provided they are but *honest* in their lives. They think nothing offends God but the open violation of those rules of *morality* which all the world must acknowledge themselves obliged to observe, and which it is *scandalous* not to observe. But this is a grievous mistake, and of most pernicious consequence. It is certain, that wherever God has revealed his will, and declared upon what terms he will bestow *salvation* upon mankind, there *all men* are, under pain of *damnation*, obliged to embrace his *revelation*, and to *believe*, and *profess*, and *practise* according to the doctrines of such *revelation*. And it is certain likewise, that God hath fully and entirely revealed his will by JESUS CHRIST and his apostles in the *New Testament*; and so revealed it, as to exclude all men from the hopes of salvation, who, having opportunity of knowing JESUS CHRIST and his doctrines, do not *believe* in him. And therefore for any man to reject this method of God, and to say, I hope to be saved by another way than God hath appointed, is the extremest folly in the world: let every one therefore among us, as they would not be undone to all eternity, endeavour to instruct themselves aright in the true religion. All their pretended *moral honesty* will not in the least excuse them before God, if, when having means to find *the truth*, they do not embrace it, but continue *infidels* or *misbelievers*. If they had been born and bred in an heathen country, where they had no opportunity of coming to the knowledge of God's *revealed will*, I know not how far their *justice* and *temperance*, and other good *moral qualities*, might avail them towards procuring God's acceptance: But to live in a *christian country*, nay, and to be baptized into *Christ's religion*, and yet to be *pagans* as to their notions and opinions; not to *believe* in JESUS CHRIST, but to think to please God in the way of the *philosophers*; there is nothing in the world to be said in their excuse for this. And they will at last find true what our *Saviour* hath pronounced, that this is their condemnation (and a heavy one it will be) that *light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.* * Therefore

I have endeavoured to supply the foregoing defects of the *Old Whole Duty of Man*, even such defects, as the said *Archbishop*, as well as the above cited author of the *Lively Oracles*, † affirm to be so *fatal* to every man's eternal salvation, by furnishing the age we live in with a *Duty of Man*, much better suited (I hope) to

* John iii. 19. 20. † See also the *Testimonies from Scripture*, &c. at the end of this Preface.

to the *christian* religion, and the occasions of the *present times*.

Tho' it may not be improper here to take notice of Two sorts of men, who are not likely to relish the following pages, *viz.* such as would gladly bring all religion into contempt, and such as think nothing should interfere with publick preaching from the pulpit. As to the *first*, no body can be ignorant but that the age we now live in, has produced many men, who make light of the *christian religion*, and talk contemptuously of our Saviour and his doctrines; but, are we to conclude from thence, That there is no reason, no argument, no evidence, to be offered for *christianity*, nor to enforce it's *faith* and *practices*, because these men, who are acknowledged to have wit and parts, make it their business to run it down? No; this would be a very false and unjust conclusion. And if you can imagine otherwise, you are strangely mistaken in your men, they never much applied their heads to examine these things, they have, perhaps, got some common-place heads, with which they think they can disparage *christianity*; and it is likely they have wit enough to set off those things to advantage: But, as for serious thinking, and putting things together, and making a solemn judgment of what is true or false in those matters, as in the presence of God, and as in a business whereon their everlasting salvation or damnation does depend; I say, as for this, you may assure yourselves, these men never did it, nor are they capable of doing it: It is not in their nature to give themselves so much trouble as such a work will require; and therefore we may be sure their *infidelity* does not proceed from any want of evidence or arguments, for the truth of the *christian religion*. In a word,

All our natural and civil duties are strongly tied upon us, by virtue of our profession of *christianity*: and it is very much to the honour of our religion, that it is wholly taken up in providing for the security and benefit of mankind, *even in this life*; it's general bent and tendency is to set men at ease, and make them happy, by securing to all the duties due from each other, and from the want of which proceeds all the mischief in the world; it does not leave men to be moved by such considerations alone as *natural reason* can suggest, but furnishes them with better. Now certainly, nothing can be more to the advantage of any man, than that all the people with whom he has to do, should be commanded by God to shew him *mercy*, and to do him *justice*, and to do him all *good offices*, and to suffer none to do him *injury*: Nothing (I say) is more likely to secure a man's peace and happiness, than such a fence as this; and yet this is the fence that *christianity* provides for every single person in the world. In fine, there never has been any religion ever framed to make men happy, *even in this life*, like that of *Jesus Christ*, if it were thoroughly pursued: for, a man cannot possibly be

made uneasy or miserable, or suffer any evil at another's hands, without the violation of some *christian* command, which, if obeyed, would have secured him from it. So that, what reasons some men really have for slighting and ridiculing the *christian religion* and the *ministers* thereof, let the world judge. We cannot enter into the hearts of men, to see upon what motives they act, and under what influences they reason; but when we consider the strength and clearness of the evidences of christianity, with the advantages and excellencies of the gospel institution, and the strict restraints it lays upon *vices* and *unbelief* of all kinds, we cannot but see that it requires the greatest degree of charity, to ascribe their infidelity to any thing but the love of *vice*, or the love of *contradiction*.

Then as to such who are so tenacious of *preaching* as to oppose all *written discourses*, I desire it may be observed, that though *preaching* is usually allowed the pre-eminence of *written discourses*, yet if men would hear or read them with due attention, they might be effectual to the same ends and purposes; for, notwithstanding what may be urged in favour of the voice, the air, and the action of a preacher; still, what is uttered with the voice passes off so fast, that men of ordinary capacities are not able to judge of the soundness of it: and the exhortations to virtue often have but little effect; because the rules and directions which we hear concerning it, are so very apt to slip out of our memories; whereas *written discourses* are always with us; and we may have recourse to them whenever we please, to recover what we have forgotten, to examine and satisfy ourselves in any thing we doubt of, and by leisurely searches and inquiries we may, by their assistance, attain to the knowledge of those sublime truths, which would otherwise be too hard for us.

And therefore I cannot but infer, That it is a great, though common mistake with some readers, to think, that *written discourses* cannot have their due praise, but there must be a design of degrading and undervaluing *preaching*: but I trust I cannot be suspected of so invidious an insinuation, when I declare the following discourses are by no means intended to hinder any one's attendance on *divine service*, but are accommodated to the occasions of such as cannot be always present at the *publick worship*; and to the use of *families* and *private persons* on *Sunday-evenings*. And those, who shall think fit to make use of them for such purposes, I hope, by God's blessing, will greatly benefit at least their *children* and *servants*; and I trust they may be so far useful to *themselves*, as to bring to their remembrance the most necessary directions for their christian conduct in this life.

To conclude; I am but little concerned for those censures, the men I have been speaking of, may pass upon this performance; because the design of it, with well disposed minds,

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will excuse for many imperfections; and if I can but in any degree promote a sense of religion, or a due respect for it's ministers, where they are wanting, or contribute to the improvement of them, where they are already entertained, I shall be much better pleased than to be an author of some account in the opinion of the greatest critics.

TESTIMONIES

From Scripture, the Liturgy, Articles, Homilies, and Writings of several learned and pious BISHOPS, &c. of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND:

PROVING

That the OLD *Whole Duty of Man* was very improperly so called, and dangerously received under that Title; because the Articles of the Christian Faith are entirely omitted in that Book; and without Faith in those Articles, the most diligent practice of the DUTIES there treated of by that Author, is not sufficient to secure to a Christian his eternal Salvation.

From SCRIPTURE.

1 Tim. ii. 5. **T**HERE is one Mediator between God and man, even the Man Christ Jesus.—No man cometh unto the Father but by him.—The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.—To seek and to save that which was lost.—That we might live through him.—That the world through him might be saved.—That believing we might have life through his name.—That whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.—Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Who is the captain of our salvation.—Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

From the Liturgy, (Office for the Sick.)

THERE is none other name under heaven given to man, in whom and through whom thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From

From the Articles.

ART. XI. Of the Justification of Man.

WE are accounted *righteous* before God *only* for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by *Faith*, and not for our own *Works* or deservings. Wherefore, that we are *justified by Faith only*, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort: as more largely is expressed in the *Homily* of *Justification*.

ART. XII. Of good Works.

ALBEIT that *good Works*, which are the *fruits* of *Faith*, and follow after *Justification*, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in *Christ*, and do spring out necessarily of a *true* and *lively Faith*; inasmuch that by them a *lively Faith* may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the *fruit*.

ART. XIII. Of Works before Justification.

Works done before the grace of *Christ*, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of *Faith* in Jesus Christ.

ART. XVIII. Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ.

There also are to be had *accursed*, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature. For *Holy Scripture* doth set out unto us *only* the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.

From the Homily, intituled,

FAITH absolutely necessary to Salvation, and to find acceptance of our *Works* before God.

Without *Faith* there can be no *good work* done, accepted and pleasing to God.—Therefore saith St. Paul, without *Faith* it is not only not possible to please God; but whatsoever work is done without *Faith*, it is sin, and dead before God. Let no man therefore reckon upon his good works before his *Faith*, because where there is no *Faith*, there can be no *good works*.—If a heathen cloathe the naked, feed the hungry, and do such other like works, yet because he doth them not in *Faith*, for the honour and love of God, they are but dead, vain, and fruitless works to him: because it must be *Faith alone* that commendeth the work to God: and therefore

TESTIMONIES in favour of

fore where the *Faith* of *Christ* is not the foundation, there is no good work, what building soever we make. So the virtues of strength, wisdom, temperance, and justice, are all referred unto this same Faith: for without this Faith we have not them, but only the names and shadows of them. Thus you shall find many, which have not the true faith, that are not of the flock of *Christ*; and yet in appearance, they flourish in good works of mercy: you shall find them full of pity, compassion, and given to justice, and yet for all that, they have no fruit of their works, because the chief work is wanting, which chief work is *Faith*, according to that declaration of *Christ* to the Jews, who asking him what they should do to work good works, he answered, *This is the work of God, to believe in him whom he hath sent.* They who glister and shine in good works without Faith in God, are like dead men, which have goodly and precious tombs, and yet it availeth them nothing.—A man must needs be nourished by good works, but first he must have Faith. He that doth good deeds, yet without Faith, he hath no life: I can shew a Man, that by Faith without works lived, and came to heaven: but without Faith never man had life. The thief that was crucified when *Christ* suffered, did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him.—It is true, if he had lived and not regarded Faith, and the works thereof, he should have lost his salvation again. But this is the effect that I say, that Faith by itself saved him, but Works by themselves never justified any man.—Whereby you may perceive, that neither Faith without works (having opportunity thereto) nor works without Faith, can avail to everlasting life.

From Bishop WILKINS.

NOtwithstanding all that can be said of natural religion (i. e. of principles and duties merely moral) it cannot be denied, but that in this dark and degenerate state into which mankind is sunk, there is a great want of a clearer light to discover our duty to us with greater certainty, and to put it beyond all doubt and dispute what is the good and acceptable will of God, and of a more powerful encouragement to the practice of our duty, by the promise of a supernatural assistance, and by the assurance of a great and eternal reward. And all these defects are fully supplied by that clear and perfect revelation, which God hath made to the world, by our blessed Saviour.—And as we are Christians, whatever we do in word or deed, we must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; and by him alone expect to find acceptance with God. *Nat. Religion, Book 2. Chap. 9.*

From Archbishop TILLOTSON.

MEN are to place all their hope and confidence of salvation in Jesus Christ the Son of God; that is, to believe that

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thro' the alone merit of his death and sufferings, God is reconciled to us; and that, only upon the account of the satisfaction which he hath made to divine justice, we are restored to the favour of God, and our sins are pardoned to us, and we have a title to eternal life. *Sermons, Vol. 3, page 466. Fol. Edit.*

From Dr. SCOTT.

THE Doctor, after having very clearly described the excellencies of the moral duties, assures us—The positive parts of religion are our duty as well as those, and God by his sovereign authority exacts them at our hands; and unless, when Jesus Christ hath been sufficiently proposed to us, we do sincerely believe in him—unless we strike covenant with him by baptism, and frequently renew that covenant in the Lord's supper—unless we diligently attend on the publick assemblies of his worship—there is no pretence of morality will bear us out when we appear before his dread tribunal. *Christ. Life, Vol. 2. page 68. 8vo. Edit.*

From Dr. GIBSON, the present Bishop of London.

TH O' it is true, that one end of Christ's coming was to correct the false glosses and interpretations of the moral law, and, in consequence thereof, one end of his instituting a ministry must be, to prevent the return of those abuses; by keeping up in the minds of men a true notion of natural religion, and a just sense of their obligations to the performance of moral duties; yet it is also true, that the main end of his coming was to establish a new covenant with mankind, founded upon new terms and new promises; to shew us a new way of obtaining forgiveness of sin, and reconciliation to God, and eternal happiness; and to prescribe rules of greater purity and holiness, by way of preparation for greater degrees of happiness and glory. These are, without doubt, the main ingredients of the gospel state, those, by which christianity stands distinguished from all other religions, and christians are raised to far higher hopes and far greater degrees of purity and perfection. In which views, it would seem strange, if a christian preacher (or writer) were to dwell only upon such duties as are common to Jews, Heathens, and Christians; and were not more especially obliged to dwell on and inculcate those principles and doctrines, which are the distinguishing excellencies of the christian religion, and by the knowledge and practice of which, more especially, every christian is intitled to the blessings and privileges of the gospel covenant. *First charge to his Clergy, page 19.*

But if, after God has made so full and clear a revelation in what way and upon what terms he will save us (I say, if after this)

(this) men will resolve to be their own guides, and refuse to be
 saved in the way that he has appointed; this is at their own
 peril. If some will believe, that trusting in Christ is their
 whole duty, and so excuse themselves from the observation of
 the moral law, and others will affirm that the observation of the
 moral law is sufficient, and so will forego the benefit of Christ's
 redemption; if some will contend that Christ has done all,
 and others that he has done nothing; to both these it is suffici-
 ent to say, that they are very vain and presumptuous in set-
 ting up the opinion and imagination of weak and fallible men,
 against the infallible testimony of persons sent and inspired by
 God. The gospel-account is as full and express as words can
 make it; on one hand, that faith in Christ is the foundation
 of a christian's title to heaven, and on the other hand, that
 repentance and good works are necessary conditions of obtain-
 ing it. *Second Past. Letter, page 63, 8vo. Edit.*

THE P R E F A C E,

IN F O R C I N G

The Necessity of Caring for the SOUL.

The C O N T E N T S.

I. *Man is composed of an immortal soul; and,* II. *Of a mortal body.* III. *Of the future state of the soul, and how it is determined.* IV. *Persuasives to the care of the soul from the nature of the first and second COVENANTS, shewing,* V. *That it is in every man's power to take that care of his soul, which the gospel requires.*

THE intention of the ensuing *Treatise* being to instruct all ranks and conditions of men, and to descend to the understandings of the *very weakest capacities*, in a *short and plain explication* of those DUTIES, which every one must believe and practise in this world, if they hope to be happy for ever in the world to come; I shall introduce the whole by endeavouring to draw them to the consideration and care of their own souls, which, being their *first and general duty*, ought to be preparatory to all the rest; because, whoso is not firmly persuaded of the necessity of *this*, will never give attention to the doctrines and exhortations of the *other duties*.

Man consists of *soul and body*; a soul, which never dieth, and which, according to the care we take of it in this life, is designed to return unto God who made it; when the body shall return unto the earth from whence it was taken.

Man consists of soul and body.

And therefore,

We may rightly conclude, that the soul of man is an immaterial principle, distinct * from the body, and is the cause of those several operations, which by inward sense and experience we are conscious of to ourselves. It is that whereby we think and remember, whereby we reason and debate about any

Of the soul and it's worth.

B

thing,

* We learn from scripture (*Eccles. iii. 21.*) that a beast has a spirit distinct from it's body, and that the said spirit is separated from it by death; and, that they are not to be considered as mere

thing, and do freely chuse and refuse such things as are presented to us; it is so created by the divine wildom and goodness, as not to have in itself any principle of corruption; but that it will naturally, or of itself, continue for ever, and cannot by any natural decay, or power of nature, be dissolved or destroyed: For when the body falls into the ground, the soul will still remain and live separate from it, and continue to perform all such operations, towards which the organs of the body are not necessary, and not only continue, but live in this separate state, so as to be sensible of happiness or misery.

It's immortality proved by reason. All which truths have great probability from the evidence of reason; and natural arguments incline us to believe them. Now the arguments from reason are taken from the nature of the soul itself; for those several actions and operations, which we are all conscious of to ourselves, such as liberty, or a power of chusing or refusing, and the several acts of reason and understanding, cannot without great violence be ascribed to matter, or be resolved into any bodily principle; and therefore we must attribute them to another principle different from matter; and consequently immortal and incapable of corruption in it's own nature. Besides, when all men, tho' distant and remote from one another, and different in their tempers and manners, and ways of education; when the most barbarous nations, as well as the most polite, agree in a thing, we may well call it the voice of nature, or a natural notion or dictate of our minds. And it is evident from the testimony of many ancient heathen writers, and the consent of several credible histories, that they believed that men and women do live after death, and

mere machines and engines without real sensation, is as evident to us, as that men have sensations; for the brute beasts appear to have all the five senses as truly as any man whatever. Nevertheless it will not follow, that their souls are immortal in the sense we attribute immortality to the souls of men; because they are not capable of the exercise of reason and religion: whereas the immortality of men's souls consists not only in a capacity of living in a state separate from the body, but of living so as to be sensible of happiness and misery, in that state of separation; because they are not only endued with a faculty of sense, but with other faculties that do not depend upon, or have any connection with, matter. And therefore altho' it should be allowed, that the souls of brutes remain when separated from their bodies; yet being only endowed with a sensitive principle, the operations of which depend upon an organical disposition of the body, which being once dissolved, they probably lapse into an insensible and inactive state; and being no further necessary, may return to their primitive nothing.

and have an existence when separated from their bodies; and consequently that the soul is immortal. It is true, that some few instances may be brought where some have denied this, but their opposition is no proof that this notion is not natural; for some few exceptions are no better arguments against an universal consent, than some few monsters and prodigies are against the regular course of nature; because men may offer violence to nature, and debauch their understandings by lust, interest, or pride, and an affectation of singularity. Moreover

The sense of nature is very evident from the great number of wicked men in the world, who, notwithstanding it is their interest that there should be no life after this, cannot overcome the fears of those torments in which the wicked are threatened to be punished for ever. Again, this truth is confirmed by those natural notions we have of God, and of the real difference between good and evil; for the belief of a God implies the belief of his infinite goodness and justice. The first, or his goodness, inclines him to make some creatures more perfect than others, and capable of greater degrees of happiness, and of longer duration; because goodness delights in communicating it's own perfections: and since in man are found the perfections of an immortal nature, which are knowledge and liberty, we may infer, that he is endowed with such a principle as in it's own nature is capable of eternal life. The latter, or his infinite justice, proves, that he loves righteousness, and hates iniquity: but the dispensations of his providence in this world being very promiscuous, so that good men often suffer, and that for the sake of righteousness; and wicked men frequently prosper, and that by means of their wickedness; it is reasonable to believe the suitable distribution of rewards and punishments in a future state: because, as there is a difference between good and evil founded in the nature of things, it is reasonable to imagine they will be distinguished by rewards and punishments, not in this world, but in a future state, where all things shall be set right, and the justice of God's providence vindicated; which is the very thing meant by the immortality of the soul. And

Lastly, the natural hopes and fears of men cannot well be accounted for without the belief of the soul's immortality; such hopes and fears are common to all men: For, what would it avail to be desirous to perpetuate a name to posterity, and by brave actions endeavour to purchase fame, if there was not a belief of an existence in another world to enjoy it? Or, can it be thought that they, who by the virtue and piety of their lives, by the justice and honesty of their actions have endeavoured to seek the Lord, have not been raised to an expectation of rewards after death? Again, how can any one account for that shame and horror, which follow the commission of any

wicked action, tho' covered with the greatest privacy, and unknown to any one but the offender? certainly it can be only the effect of nature, which suggests to them the certainty of an after-reckoning, when they shall be punished for their bad actions, or rewarded for their good; and so fills the one full of hopes, and the other with fear and dread.

These are such arguments as in reason the nature of the thing will bear; for an immortal nature is neither capable of the evidence of sense, nor of mathematical demonstration; and therefore we should content ourselves with these arguments in this matter, so far as to suffer ourselves to be persuaded, that it is highly probable. But that which giveth us the greatest

By scripture. assurance of it, is the revelation of the gospel, whereby life and immortality is brought to light, and which is the only sure foundation of our hopes, and an anchor for our faith; because the authority of God is above all reason and human knowledge. The resurrection of Christ is not only a manifest proof of his divine authority, and that he was a prophet sent from God, but also that we shall rise again to be reunited with our souls; and therefore should make us prefer the interest of our souls before all the advantages of this life; nay, it should make us ready and willing to part with every thing that is most dear to us in this world, to secure their eternal welfare; because if we lose our own souls, all the enjoyments of this world can make us no recompence. For, notwithstanding the fall of our first parents has made us all subject to death, yet our souls, when separated from our bodies, shall live in another state; and even our bodies, tho' committed to the grave, and turned to dust, shall, at the last day, rise again, and be united to our souls; and being so united, the whole man, body and soul, shall be made capable of eternal happiness or misery. And

Of the body. II. Since this is the case with all of us, how inconsiderately do men act in spending so much thought about the *body*, which is the seat of pains and the most noisome diseases, whilst it is alive; and which death (which it cannot escape) renders so intolerably offensive and odious, that it must be buried out of our sight? To spend all our time and care about this vile part, the body, and to neglect the most valuable part, the soul, which is of inestimable worth, on account of it's noble faculties, and as it is made after God's own image, and is to exist to all eternity, certainly argues the greatest degree of imprudence and stupidity. Consequently, our greatest kindness for our body is to take care of our soul. Consider whether we are able to live in the midst of everlasting fire. If the burn of a finger, or a small spark of fire be so intolerable to the least part of the body, who can endure the fire that shall never be quenched? and whose torments after thou-

sands

hundreds and millions of years are no nearer an end than they were at the first moment they began. Yet, this is the woeful and certain end of every one that neglects the care of his own soul. Not that I would be understood to intend, that we must neglect our bodies: but that, which promotes the interest of our souls, must be preferred before any interests of the body, which cannot live without the soul. For

Every present enjoyment, be it ever so comfortable, may be lost; and riches, whatever advantage they give us, may take themselves wings and fly away. How many are reduced in

Which has no certain happiness

a few hours from plentiful circumstances to extreme necessity by fire or water? Besides, if people do imagine themselves secure in an inheritance, a small observation of human life may shew, that this cannot absolutely be depended upon; for, fraud and violence may turn a man out of his fortune or estate. And where is the person that can depend upon a continued state of health? The most confirmed constitution is not proof against the assaults of pain or sickness; for, every member of the body, every bone, joint and sinew, lies open to many disorders; and the greatest prudence, or precaution, or skill of the physician cannot many times prevent those disorders from coming upon us, much less ascertain to us the greatest of our outward enjoyments. Again, we often see the highest honours exchanged for the lowest abasements, and contempt; so the rich man is frequently reduced to poverty; the healthy man laid upon a bed of languishing; and all the pleasures the sinner can receive from the most careful gratification of his sensual appetites, are but of the very same kind with those that brute beasts are capable of as well as he; only with this difference, that their enjoyments are more affecting and less allayed with bitterness than his are. But, besides, they have far more uneasiness and trouble in them than of delight and satisfaction. The covetous, the proud, the envious, the glutton, the drunkard, the whoremonger, the ambitious, the revengeful can testify out of their own sad experience, that when they have summed up the matter, the contentment they receive from the gratification of these several passions or appetites doth no ways countervail the pains and restlessness, the disturbances and disappointments, and the manifold evil consequences both as to their bodies and souls, and good names, and estates, which they suffer upon the account of them. And the man who stood in the first rank of dignity, is soon debased to a low degree, whence we may cry out with the preacher, vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, which does not tend to the care of the immortal soul. For, The body itself, to which alone such comforts are suited, is ever tending towards the dust, and will soon be stripped of all sensation of

all worldly things, and entirely lose the relish of those things that once had been most agreeable to it. And yet no man is exempt from this debt; we must all go down to the silent grave, and can carry none of those things along with us; and all our pleasure and ease, if they should happen to last so long, must then have their end. Whereas

*How the state
of the soul is
determined.*

III. On the other hand, that which serves the interest of our souls, is most lasting and is never taken from us, whose state hereafter will be determined by our behaviour in this life; heaven

or hell, happiness or misery, will be our final portion, just as death finds us: as soon as death strikes, we either are in torments or go to paradise; either become the companions of devils, or the associates of holy angels, so to remain to all eternity; and therefore our greatest care should be to avoid the one and obtain the other. We are often determined in the affairs of this life by the hope and fear of things to come; as all our pursuits, and most of our actions, are for the sake of something future, and not yet in sight; that is, either to prevent some evil feared, or to obtain some good desired; for in the beginning of life, people apply themselves to become masters of some profession or trade, or business, in hopes of a livelihood, or of serviceableness, when they arrive at riper years, tho' they are not sure they shall ever live to be masters of what they labour after, nor certain of success in the most prudent steps they can take to accomplish the end of their worldly expectations, of which we have far less certainty than of an immortal state. Shall it then be said, that we shall be less diligent in the care of our souls, whose affairs are not so uncertain? For, tho' we therein act upon a future prospect, yet divine promise ascertains us of success in the way of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Wherefore, tho' the benefit is future, that is no reason to abate our zeal in prosecuting it. I have observed that reason does not prevail to slacken man's endeavours for his worldly gain: How unreasonable then must they be, who have the advantage of a better hope in their aims for another life, and yet neglect the means to attain that happy state? Again, it can be no excuse for a man to say, that he cannot comply with that self-denial, mortification, and other christian duties, which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and without which the soul languisheth, is sick, and his faith is dead: for he cannot be ignorant of that plain rule of wisdom, to decline a present pleasure for one equal to it of longer continuance; or to submit to a present inconvenience, to prevent one more lasting; or to obtain a more lasting good, tho' there should be no difference in the things themselves, but only in their duration. Thus a wise man will never refuse to go through a short course of physick in an ill habit of body upon a fair prospect of procuring

ring a regular state of health thereby; nor neglect to give a small sum of money in hand, upon security of enjoying a good inheritance in a few years after; and shall he neglect to take proper care of his soul, to cleanse it from all impurity, and to prepare it for the enjoyment of that blessed state of eternal happiness which is promised to all those who love God and keep his commandments? Especially knowing that the most lasting things below bear no proportion to eternal happiness. If we measure them with eternity, they are as nothing; and a minute compared with our whole lives is no proportion in comparison of time and eternal duration. Therefore whatever is temporal, is incapable of giving full satisfaction, because it may be taken from us. So when we are upon an inquiry after happiness, we may discern at first, that earth says, It is not in me: for every thing here is perishing, and must soon have an end. Thus the continuance of happiness is the most satisfying character of it; and the eternity of misery the most bitter ingredient thereof. It is impossible to be perfectly happy with the prospect of an end before one. This consideration would magnify inferior delights, to think that we should never be deprived of them; and light afflictions, with eternity written upon them, could not be borne. What then shall we think of perfect happiness and complete misery, both of the highest kind, and both eternal, and in one of which mankind must live for ever? Oh! then let us apply to ourselves the force and evidence of that question, What is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or, what will a man give in exchange for his soul? Therefore

Why eternal happiness is desirable.

IV. As the portion of the body at the last day must follow the condition of the soul, it is our greatest interest to consider the present state of the human nature, and the means by which alone it is possible for us to be made happy. For if we neglect the disorders of the understanding, will, and affections, which are the parts of the soul, the flesh will ruin us, at the very time it pretends to please us; and the devil will gain many opportunities to beguile us; whilst the understanding is darkened and shut to good instruction, the will inclines to chuse the evil, and the affections are bent after the pleasures of sin. It is true, man was made holy and upright by God; but having, by his voluntary transgression, and wilful disobedience, fallen from him, did presently sink into a corrupt and degenerate, into a miserable and cursed condition, both in respect to this life and to that life which is to come: so thus, by original sin, he is not only deprived of the image of God, but become liable to his justice; and as such, God cannot take pleasure in him; and that man that dies before he is restored to his favour, must be separated from him, and be

Persuaves to the care of the soul.

From the nature of the first covenant.

for ever miserable. And as man could not recover himself, nor raise himself out of his own ruin; and as no creature was able to do it, the mercy of God pitied our misery, and his wisdom devised this expedient to reconcile his mercy and justice, viz. that no man should on account of original sin be eternally miserable, except through his own fault; and his goodness resolved, that the Son of God should undertake this work, and satisfy the offended justice of the Almighty, and repair the ruined nature of mankind. Thus

God did enter into a new covenant with man, by way of remedy for what was past and could not be undone; which, as may be fully collected from the gospel, was to this purpose: That on condition of man's steadfast faith, sincere repentance, and perfect obedience, he should be restored thro' Christ to God's favour; and after death, to that life and happiness, which was promised to our first parents, without tasting of death. [Not that the condition of the gospel covenant is a perfect unfinning obedience, but a sincere endeavour to obey all the commands of God to the utmost of our power. Which commands, in their general and most proper sense, are so far from being impossible to be observed, that on the contrary a man cannot easily transgress them, without a hardened conscience and deliberate choice. And whensoever God requires more of us than we are naturally able to perform, he never fails to afford us proportionably great assistance, to enable us to perform what he so requires. If through the frailty and infirmity of our nature we be at any time, notwithstanding our sincere endeavours to the contrary, surprised into the commission of sin, God accepts real repentance and a renewed obedience, instead of an uninterrupted course of holiness. Hence it is abundantly evident, that as the true and only design of the laws of the gospel, is to make us holy and undefiled; so it is possible for us to be really holy according to the true intent and meaning of those laws. Wherefore, as the excellent nature and design of our religion sufficiently recommends it to our judgment; so the possibility of obeying it is a most powerful encouragement to us, to set in earnest about the practice of it. But then we must always consider, that as God requires nothing more of us, than a sincere obedience according to the gracious terms of the gospel covenant, so he will not accept of any thing less: for as it is possible for us to be holy and undefiled according to the true intent of the laws of our religion; so God has made it the indispensable condition of our happiness, that we actually and in reality become such holy persons.] By this means God and man are brought together again; and man is redeemed from a state of sin and eternal death, to a state of holiness, and to the inheritance of eternal life. And this was the end for which the Son of God clothed himself with our flesh, that as man he might suffer

suffer what our sins had deserved, and as he was the son of God, he might make a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction to the divine justice for the sins of the whole world, who, for the joy of delivering so many millions of souls from misery, endured the death of the cross, and all the afflictions of his bitter passion, which was the perfect sacrifice whereby all mankind are restored to the favour of God, and put into a state of salvation; God having, for his Son's sake, promised to pardon all such as shall repent, and forsake their sins, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and to give his holy spirit to all such as shall sincerely pray for the same, and after death to make them eternally happy, if during this short state of trial, which is designed to amend our corrupt and disordered nature, they endeavour to observe the rules which he has revealed in his word, and which are absolutely necessary to make them capable of eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven.

Our care will not be in vain.

V. To conclude with the sentiments of a devout and pious divine. The great plea that men do generally make for the wickedness or carelessness of their lives is this, That it really is not in their power to live up to such a state of holiness and virtue, as the law of God obligeth them to: grace is in them too weak, and their natural corruptions too strong, for their ever being in a capacity, without more assistance from God, to live strict and religious lives: conversion is the work of God, and cannot be wrought by a man's self, and therefore till God shall please to come upon them, with an irresistible power of his Holy Spirit, they must be contented to live as they do; nay, they must unavoidably live so. Now it is readily granted, that without God's grace no man can do any thing; and we grant likewise, that it is very probable their circumstances may be such, that it is not morally possible, unless they had greater strength and more grace than they have, on a sudden to live as they ought to do; for, their bad principles are really more powerful than their good ones; but yet, in the mean time, we must needs tell them, that they are not mere stocks and stones. How much reason soever they have to complain of the infirmity or degeneracy of their natures, yet some things they can do towards the bettering of them: for instance, tho' they cannot on a sudden conquer the inward bent and inclination of their minds, so as to hate all sin, and to delight in virtue; yet they must needs confess that they have a power over their outward actions: they can as well (if they think it reasonable) direct their feet towards a church, as to a house of gaming, or drinking, or lewdness: their eyes will serve them as well to look upon a bible, or a serious discourse about religion, as to read a scurrilous and a prophane book: it is as much in their power

power (if they please) to yield their ears to the reasonable advice of their sober friends, as to the mad harangues of the dissolute company they keep. These things they must needs acknowledge they can do, if they will: nay, and they can do more than this; for (if they please) they may give themselves time to think and consider of what they read, or what is said to them, or what their own experience or observation of things will suggest to their minds; and they can further (if they please) add to their consideration their prayers to Almighty God to direct them, to assist them, to strengthen them. And tho' it is certain, that all this without God's especial grace will not be effectual for their regeneration and conversion; yet, if they will but do as much as this comes to, we can assure them, that in time they shall have this especial grace which they now want. In the same proportion that they use and employ those gifts and powers which they at present have, God will increase and enlarge them. And the truth of all this is confirmed to us by that memorable saying of our Saviour, which we find in his mouth at several times, and upon several occasions: To him that hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have in abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

The Prayer.

O GOD, the protector of all that trust in thee, who wast pleased to accept the death and passion of thy dear Son Jesus Christ for an expiation for the sins of mankind, and a ransom of their guilty souls from the torments of hell: grant that I may duly weigh the efficacy of his merits; and faithfully improve the benefits of my redemption. Let not the pleasures of sin betray me, nor the craftiness of Satan deceive me: but do thou guard and protect me with thy blessed Spirit against all spiritual temptations; and let me always have the danger and care of my soul before my eyes, and the torments of the damned fresh in my memory: so that by contemplating upon others' misery, I may hate their practices, and avoid their punishments, through the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

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THE FIRST PART
OF THE NEW
Whole Duty of Man :

CONTAINING
Our Duty towards G O D.

SUNDAY I.

The CONTENTS.

I. Of the duty of man, as we are taught by natural and revealed religion; containing the three great branches of our duty to GOD, our NEIGHBOUR, and OURSELVES. II. Our duty to GOD is to believe in him, and in his affirmations, commands, promises, and threatnings. III. To hope in him, without presumption or despair. IV. To love him for his excellencies and kindness. V. To fear him rather than men. VI. To trust in him in all dangers and wants. VII. To submit to his divine will, both in respect of obedience and patience, in all his commands and disposals.

THE christian religion being the means, which God hath appointed for the restoring mankind to his favour, which man had forfeited by his disobedience, and for his recovering the image of God, the Almighty does therein give us a new hope and title to that everlasting happiness, for which man was at first created; but this is only to be hoped for on certain conditions, namely, our lively faith and sincere and hearty endeavours to obey his will; on the performance and neglect whereof depend our eternal happiness and misery: therefore it is of the greatest importance for us to inquire, what that faith is, and what those several things are, to which God requires our obedience. Now

It is certain, that the *light of nature* discovers *Of natural religion.* to us the being of a God, and so much of his infinite perfection, as to teach us that he is all good, and hateth every thing that is evil; that he loveth those that avoid the evil and chuse the good; and will with severe justice punish the evil doers. So that the light of nature searcheth out the goodness and justice of God; man's duty and subjection to his Creator; and disposes us to receive the perfect will of the Almighty. This is called *natural religion*, which all men might know, and should be obliged unto by the mere principles of reason, improved by consideration and experience, without the help of revelation. And they who live by it shall also be judged

judged by it, their consciences accusing or else excusing one another. But

Of revealed religion.

The dimness of this is much cleared up by *revealed religion*,* or that method by which God makes himself, or his will, known to mankind, over and above what he hath made known to us by the light of nature; in such a manner and in such instances, that all our own reasonings could never have attained unto. Not that hereby God did mean to put out any part of that natural light, which he had set up in our souls; but to give greater light unto men. And therefore the possibility of revealed religion is evident from the nature of God, and the capacities of men, as well as from that proof, which is produced to satisfy us concerning a mission

Is reasonable and certain.

from God. An infinite being, that created our souls capable of knowing him and loving him, can never want power to communicate farther light to our minds, and make brighter discoveries of his will and pleasure: it carries no opposition to natural light, that God should reveal his mind by some particular persons to the world: forasmuch as the great ignorance and corruption of human nature, and that misery and guilt, which mankind had contracted, made it both necessary and expedient for man. For tho' natural light ascertains the being of a Deity, and shews us how reasonable it is to pay our adorations to that power, that created and preserves us; yet it does not sufficiently direct us in the way and manner of performing it: and tho' it gives us some hopes of pardon upon our repentance, from the general notion of God's goodness; yet it prescribes us no certain method for the obtaining our reconciliation. So that revealed religion

Why necessary. was necessary both to relieve the wants of men in a natural state, and to recover the lustre and brightness of those principles, which God originally implanted in them, tho' now sullied and impaired by the corruptions of mankind; and to add such improvements as might draw human nature to a true sense of its own bad state and weakness; and to instruct men in the method of obtaining pardon of their offended Creator.

When published.

Thus the God of nature has at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoken in times past, says the apostle, unto the fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he speaketh unto us by his Son Jesus Christ. In which revelation are contained *articles of faith* to be believed; *precepts of life* to be practised; and *motives and arguments* to enforce obedience: from whence it is natural to collect, that the knowledge of the holy scriptures is necessary to our eternal salvation; because these are the great and stand-
ing

Sund. 1.] *The three Branches of Man's Duty.* 27

ing revelation of God to mankind; wherein the nature of God, and his will concerning our duty, and the terms and conditions of our eternal happiness in another world, are fully and plainly declared to us. Therefore, tho' there be some things which our reason and understanding cannot fathom; yet because we are satisfied they are revealed by God, who cannot lye, whose knowledge is infallible, and whose word is true, we ought, upon this higher and superior reason, to yield a firm assent to the truth of them. And though we meet therein with many precepts of life, which corrupt nature may be unwilling to put in practice; yet we must remember it is the Lord who commands them, and we must obey with the resignation becoming a child of God; Lord, not my will but thine be done; who by the mouth of his holy apostle has expressly commanded us to live SOBERLY, RIGHTE-
*Must be be-
lieved.*
 OUSLY, and GODLY in this present world: where in the word *soberly* is contained our duty to OUR-
*The three great
branches of
man's duty.*
 SELVES; and by *righteously* we are to under-
 stand our duty to our NEIGHBOURS, and by
 godly, our duty to GOD. And as religion itself

is that purity, or that virtuous temper and disposition of mind, which exerts itself in a constant endeavour of being like unto God, and of obeying his commands, which is the principal distinction of men from the inferior orders of creatures; and upon which alone are grounded all hopes of life and happiness hereafter: So the great end and design of religion is, by the trial of mens virtue and integrity in the present world, to qualify them for the happiness of that which is to come; that they who have been faithful in a small and temporary trust, committed to them here, may hereafter be put in possession of a never-fading inheritance, which shall be their own for ever. In a matter of so great importance, therefore, 'tis very wonderful, that any man who calls himself a reasonable creature should be careless, and indifferent; careless, whether he has any religion, or none; indifferent, whether his religion, when he does profess any, be true or false; careless, when he has embraced the true religion, whether he makes any improvement in his practice answerable to it, or no: so that the foundation of a christian's duty is a due regard of God, our neighbour, and ourselves: of which duties I shall treat in their proper order.

II. "Our duty towards God is to believe in
 "him, to fear him, to love him with all our
 "heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and
 "with all our strength: to worship him, to give him thanks,
 "to put our whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his
 "holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days
 "of our life." In which short description of our duty towards

Believing him to be God. God, we are directed to believe and acknowledge the being and self existence of a God; that he is from everlasting, and world without end; that he is a spirit, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; that he is the great creator and preserver of all things, the father of light, in whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning, cloathed with the infinite perfections of power, wisdom, and goodness, from which all the other divine attributes do flow; that in the godhead there are three distinct persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: Therefore he that cometh to God, must thus believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And

It is in vain to make profession of religion, without being first well instructed and firmly persuaded of the being and attributes of God; right notions of which every one knows are the foundation of all religion. But then this knowledge must not be a bare speculation; but a serious, practical, affecting impression, and deep sense upon the mind, of a supreme being, who created the world by his power, preserves and governs it by his goodness and wisdom, and will judge it with justice, mercy and truth: of such a supreme being, whose glory no eye can behold; whose majesty no thought can comprehend; whose power no strength can resist; from whose presence no swiftness can flee; from whose knowledge no secret can be concealed; whose justice no art can evade; whose goodness every creature partakes of: so that the duty of believing in God implies, not only our believing his being, and his being governor and judge of the world; but also that we have worthy and honourable apprehensions of his nature and attributes. Now as without belief in God there can be no religion; so where there is such a belief in God, the scripture always in course supposes it accompanied with every other part of true religion, and what those parts are I shall now inform you. Wherefore,

Faith in God. Our first approach unto God is by *faith*, without which it is impossible to please God. Now faith is a firm belief of things at present not seen; a conviction upon the mind, of the truth of the premises and threatnings of God made known in the scriptures; of the certain reality of the rewards and punishments of the life to come; which enables a man, in opposition to all the temptations of a corrupt world, to obey God in expectation of an invisible reward hereafter. As faith is also a sincere persuasion of the mind, concerning the certainty or credibility of any truth or fact arising from another's testimony, the reason of faith in the holy scriptures is strong and forcible; because that is the testimony of God, concerning those things in which are contained the means of eternal life, which may properly be reduced under *affirmations, commands, threatnings and promises*. And

First of his affirmations; such are the creation of the world, the dispensations of providence in former ages; and above all, the Son of God manifested in the flesh; his life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the distinction of the blessed Trinity into Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the dead; the last judgment, and the rewards and punishments which will ensue upon it. These affirmations of God contained in scripture, though above our understanding, and not to be perceived by sense, nor to be seen through with the closest application, yet, if we have faith, and trust in his promises, become present unto us.

The next instance by which we are to shew our faith in God's word, is to believe that all his commands are true; just and fit to be commanded; and that they are the rule and measure of our obedience, to shew us wherein, and how we must obey him. Therefore our faith in his commands must be constantly shewn by our sincere obedience.

The third thing in scripture which demands our belief, are God's promises made both to our bodies and souls of outward necessities, present ease and refreshment, and of all the benefits of Christ's death and passion; the promise of divine guidance to the weakness of our understanding and judgments; of strength in tribulation; of grace under temptations; and of acceptance and pardon upon our faith and sincere endeavours, which is always to be accounted a necessary condition on our part. The end therefore of our belief in God's promises is to stir us up to perform the conditions, which when we have done, we may justly apply the promises to ourselves, and expect our share in them; but till then, how sure soever we believe these promises to be, we can't hope for any benefit from them, seeing we are not the persons to whom they were made, until we have performed the conditions they require.

We are also to believe that God is just and powerful, that he will and is able to punish sinners both with spiritual and temporal afflictions, and eternal destruction: and we are not only to believe that the terrors of the Lord are recorded for our admonition and caution, but to preserve us from those sins to which these punishments are justly threatened, and to recover us to repentance, when we have fallen, or to fortify us against compliance in the hour of temptation. This is the object of faith fitted to work upon our minds on account of its certainty and importance. We have all the assurance of the truth of these that we are capable of in this life, from the dictates of reason, and the general consent of mankind, besides the most credible revelation of these things in the gospel. How strange then

is it, that some satisfy themselves with the zeal they express for the profession of the true religion, tho' they dishonour that profession by unrighteous works! That others expect to obtain salvation by the strength of their faith, utterly mistaking the very meaning of the word faith; apprehending it to signify credulity instead of fidelity, and that they shall be accepted for being confident instead of faithful servants! That some depend upon certain things that can be done for them by others, as if any thing could (in the religious sense) be of advantage to any man, which does not at all make him the better man! That others rely upon the merits of Christ, deceiving themselves with an expectation that Christ will rescue them from punishment, tho' they reject all the motives by which his gospel proposes to rescue them from sin! And as to the importance of this faith, every one must own, that the highest hopes and the greatest fears, are sufficient springs of human actions; for what can concern us more than eternal happiness and eternal misery? Thus we may observe, that faith in God through Jesus Christ, includes our obedience to his laws, and produceth in the heart of a sincere and true believer, an humble hope in his promises.

Hope in God.

III. A *second* duty to God is HOPE, which hope may be improved into a strong reliance and dependence upon the truth and goodness of the Lord, for his performance of those things promised on his part, which is a condition of our acceptance with him. So that an humble hope, the effect of faith, is a proper homage to God upon the foot of this infallible truth, that he neither can be mistaken himself, nor is under any temptation to deceive us. Whatever he says, must be true, and accordingly claims our firm hope and dependence, tho' we can have no other evidence for it besides his word: yet we

Where grounded.

Its use.

should indeed be very careful, that we have the word of God to support our hope, and that we have used the best means in our power, to understand the true meaning of Gods word: which are the only means to guard us against those two pernicious extremes, presumption and despair, which interrupt or destroy this duty. Therefore tho' the apostle has taught us in general to hope all things, we must watch our own corruption, and not suffer it to rely too much upon our own strength. For

Presumption.

we are guilty of the great sin of *presumption*, when we neglect those means of grace, which are established in order to enable us to perform our duty: when we rashly run ourselves into temptations, presuming upon our own ability to encounter them; and, even in those trials that the providence of God brings upon us, when we trust more to our own resolution than to his divine assistance: and consequently he who hopeth for pardon of sins and eternal life, without that repentance and obedience, to which alone they are promised, is

presumptuous

presumptuous hypocrite, whose hope shall perish. For this self-confident temper often betrays us to undertake what we have neither capacity nor ability to perform. It makes us neglect those previous measures, which are necessary to accomplish what we design. It teaches us by dear-bought experience the frailties and infirmities of our nature. It frequently makes shipwreck of a good conscience, and provokes God to withdraw his grace, which we lay so little stress upon, in order to our preservation. And therefore,

To cure this sort of presumption, we should consider the weakness and frailty of human nature, and the frequent instances of it in our own conduct, and how unable we are of ourselves to do any thing that is good; we should reflect upon those eminent examples, that have been fatally betrayed by too great a confidence in themselves; and which are set up, as so many marks for us to avoid those rocks upon which they split. Yet,

We are not to be so borne down with our sins, *Of despair.* and mistrust the mercy of God, as to run into the contrary fault, which is *despair*. For, tho' it be true, that sin is the saddest slavery in the world; yet it must not break and sink mens spirits, and make them so base and servile, as to deprive them of that courage necessary to rescue themselves from it. For, as long custom and continuance in sin deprives us of our strength, so it discourageth our hopes, both of God's grace and assistance, and of his mercy and forgiveness. And when this *When the effect of melancholy.* despair is the effect of religious melancholy, which is frequently an indisposition of body, then there is no such reason to be cast down. For whoever complains of want of improvement under the exercise of religious duties, and want of a fervent zeal and love towards God, only because they want warmth and affection in the performance of their duty, which duty they nevertheless do perform sincerely and carefully; then there is no just ground for trouble of mind upon that account: but they must be taught to comfort themselves by considering, that the different degree of affection, with which different persons serve God, depends much more upon the accidental difference of their constitutions of body, than it is any true measure of the goodness of their minds; that in one and the same person, there will unavoidably be different degrees of affection at different times, according to the present temper of his body, the order or disorder of his spirits, the natural passions and commotions of his mind, without any real change in his moral dispositions; and that no man can at all times keep up an equal vigour of mind. Or, if it be because, after his best endeavours in the course of a virtuous life, he cannot find in himself that passionate love of the supreme Good, which he finds some writers have described

described in an unintelligible manner, this is no just ground of uneasiness at all; for whoever sincerely obeys the commandments of God, in the course of a virtuous and religious life, needs no other mark or proof of his love towards him. Or, if it be an apprehension that possibly they may be excluded from mercy by some positive decree and fore-appointment of God; this is absolutely contrary to all our natural notions of the divine attributes, to conceive that the infinitely merciful and good God should for his own pleasure, and not for any wickedness of theirs, eternally decree any of his creatures to be miserable. Neither in scripture indeed is there any foundation for any such apprehension, whatever there may be in the writings of some unskilful interpreters. Nor can there be any just reason of despair even to those, whose minds

When the effect of our sins.

are troubled at the remembrance of past sins; for tho' these are, and ought to be, such a trouble of mind, as nothing but effectual repentance and amendment can remove; yet when amendment has really taken place, then the sorrow for what is past, may reasonably be relieved by the assurance of pardon. For tho' the great and principal promise of pardon is made indeed to unbelievers at their conversion and being baptized; yet there is also sufficient encouragement given, even to relapsing sinners to repent. The despair then we speak of, is a disorder which consists in a settled rooted persuasion, that we shall never obtain mercy, let us do whatever we can; for it is no temper or state of mind worthy of blame, to despair of mercy while we continue in sin. But

It's remedy.

The hope we have in God thro' Christ Jesus, is a remedy against this sin: for as by despair the devil would persuade a sinner that he can never obtain mercy; so God does give a certain hope of eternal glory to all that will seek for mercy by sincere repentance, and obedience through Jesus Christ. How then can a rational creature give up his reason, so far as to give himself up for lost, when the God that made him, and is to reward or punish him, doth promise his mercy to as many as will change their evil course of life? Yet, we must not stop here: For,

Love of God.

Motive to it.

IV. A third duty to God is LOVE. We must love God sincerely and affectionately; we must desire to please him, and to perform his will; we must desire to be made acceptable to him, and to become partakers of his favour and rewards, rather than of the unreasonable pleasures of unrighteousness: because all the reasons for the loving any object or thing in the world, do more forcibly recommend to us the love of God. He is in himself most excellent, fit to be our chief happiness, and hath actually shewn himself our best friend: upon all which accounts our best love is due.

due to him. His goodness and excellency tarnish all the beauty and excellence of creatures; *God's excellency.* there is none good, but one, that is God; because he is good in such a sense, as none can be acknowledged good besides. He alone is perfectly, originally, necessarily, and unchangeably good; he has every excellence in the highest degree; almighty power, unerring wisdom, infinite goodness, unblemished truth, spotless holiness; every thing fit to raise the wonder, and engage the delight of men and angels; and his glory shines out in the works of creation and providence. Power and wisdom may command dread and admiration; yet nothing but goodness can challenge our love and affection. He gave us our being, and in the whole course of our lives his goodness prevents numberless *God's kindness to us.* evils from falling upon us, which, with all our

reason and understanding, we could by no means either prevent or avoid. And when we were fallen from that happiness, for which, at first, we were designed, he was pleased to restore us to a new capacity of it, by sending his only Son into the world to die for us; the benefits of whose death and passion no man can lose, but by his own fault. He has endued us with reason and natural conscience, to distinguish between good and evil, and to forewarn us of the certainty of a future judgment. He has confirmed this natural conscience, with the additional help of an express revelation: and that sinners may, if possible, be brought to repentance, he, with much long-suffering and forbearance, defers their punishment; and, if they do repent, he forgives and pardons them, as a father receives a returning child. Again, we cannot but love him, who is good, and does us good.

And if God vouchsafes to love us, we must also shew our love of him, by first desiring to please *Fruit of love is a desire of pleasing.* him; and also by a desire to enjoy him. For the first token of any one's love is doing what is thought most acceptable to the person loved: so that a true love of God will shew itself first in keeping his commandments; for that is its description by St. John, and where this token is wanting, there can be no love of God. So that if any one continues in a wilful breach of many, nay but of any one command of his, he is deceived in thinking that the love of God abideth in him. Therefore our Saviour expressly declares it, as the first and great commandment, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; because, as the excellency and kindness of God is most transcendent, so our love of him must be most fervent, and preferable to every other thing. If our love of God be sincere, we shall entertain high and admiring thoughts of him, according to those discoveries, which he hath made of himself: we shall reverence him as the most perfect being; and give him

him the glory of his excellencies, as we turn our thoughts either to the works of nature in our creation, or to the wonders of grace in our redemption, or to the prospects of glory in the world to come. Such a soul will say, I see that God alone can be my portion; in his favour is my life; without that, though I had all the world, I should be destitute and miserable. This love arises from the sense of benefits received: It is like the filial love of a dutiful child to a tender and indulgent parent, upon a review of his care and kindness, in preserving him, providing for him, doing him all the good that lies in his power; which engages him to study to requite his parents in the best manner he can. Such is the love of God found in a pious soul. And therefore let those who, tho' they really love, and fear, and serve God in the course of a virtuous and religious life, yet, because they feel not in themselves that warmth of affection which many enthusiasts pretend to, are afraid and suspect that they do not love God sincerely as they ought, be corrected, by considering that there is no other mark so infallible of the goodness of a tree, as the fruit which it brings forth. If they live in obedience to the commands of God, they need no other evidence of the sincerity of their hearts towards him: for all other signs may possibly be erroneous; but this is the very thing signified itself. Love of goodness, righteousness, and truth, is love of God: for God is goodness and truth; and he who loves these virtues, which are the moral perfections of the divine nature, does therefore love God most perfectly, because he loves those excellencies, for the sake of which God expects that we should love him above all things.

Desire of enjoying. The other fruit of love is the desire of enjoying: this is the case of all men. They desire the company of those they love: so he that sincerely loves God, will not only be constant in prayer, meditation, hearing his word, and receiving the blessed sacrament with cheerfulness and devotion; but will earnestly wish to be dissolved, and be with Christ in the glory of God the Father; with an entire resignation of this world, and all its enjoyments, to God's will and pleasure.

Fear of God. V. The fourth duty to God is FEAR. There are two bridles or restraints which God hath put upon human nature, *shame* and *fear*. Shame is the weaker, and hath place only in those in whom there are some remains of virtue. Fear is the stronger, and works upon all, who love themselves, and desire their own preservation. Therefore in this degenerate state of mankind, fear is that passion which hath the greatest power over us, and by which God and his laws take the surest hold of us: our desire, and love, and hope, are not so apt to be wrought upon by the representation of virtue, and the promises of reward and happiness, as our fear is from the apprehensions of divine displeasure. For tho' we have lost in a great

measure

measure the relish of true happiness, yet we still retain a quick sense of pain and misery. So that fear is founded on a natural love of ourselves, and is interwoven with a necessary desire of our own preservation. And therefore religion usually makes its first entrance into us by this passion: hence perhaps it is, that Solomon more than once calls the fear of the Lord, the beginning of wisdom. Which fear of God is not the superstitious dread of an arbitrary or cruel being, but that awe and regard which necessarily arises in the mind of every man, who believes and habitually considers himself as living and acting in the sight of an omnipresent Governor, of perfect justice, holiness, and purity; who sees every thought, as well as every action; who cannot be imposed upon by any hypocrisy; who, as certainly as there is any difference between good and evil, cannot but approve the one, and detest the other; and whose government consists in rewarding what he approves, and punishing what he hates. This fear of God is the foundation of religion: for, the great support of virtue among men is the sense upon their minds of a supreme Governor and Judge of the universe, who will finally and effectually reward what is in itself essentially worthy of reward, and punish what is worthy of punishment. And consequently fear brings us into subjection to God's authority, and enforces the practice of our duty: for the fear of the Lord is to depart from evil. Yet

It may with sorrow be observed, that the fear *The folly of* of men, or a dread not to provoke them, is too *fearing men* often stronger than the fear of God; tho' God *more than God* is infinitely more to be dreaded than man: which is the lesson we are taught by Christ himself, who says, Fear not men that can kill the body; that is, fear not men so much as God; fear him infinitely more. It is very lawful for us to fear men, and to stand in awe of their power; because they can kill the body, and death is terrible; but when the power of man comes in competition with omnipotency, and what man can do to the body in this world, with what God can do to the body and soul in the other; there is no comparison between the terror of the one and of the other. God can do all that man can do, he can kill the body, and that by an immediate act of his divine power. He can blast our reputation, and ruin our estate, and afflict our bodies with the sharpest pains, and smite us with death. And God doth all that with ease, which men many times do with labour; they use the utmost of their wit and power, to do us mischief; but God can do all things by a word: if he do but speak, judgments come; we are but a little dust, and the least breath of God can disperse it; he hath all creatures at his command, ready to execute his will. So that whatever man, or any creature can do, that God can do also, and infinitely more. His power is not confined to the body, but he hath power over the

the spirit ; he can not only make body and soul miserable in this world, but in the other also ; and that not only for a few years, but for all eternity. Therefore

Its danger.

The fear of men will not be a sufficient plea and excuse for men ; it will not be enough to say, This I was awed into by the apprehension of danger, or by the fear of sufferings ; or, that I chose rather to trust God with my soul, than men with my estate ; to save my life I renounced my religion, was ashamed of Christ, and denied him before men : tho' our Saviour hath told us plainly, Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with his holy angels. Thus they who out of fear of men offend God, are guilty of this folly ; they incur the danger of a greater evil : for whilst they are endeavouring to escape the hands of men that shall die, they fall into the hands of the living God. Do we fear the wrath of man, whose breath is in his nostrils, who can but afflict a little, and for a little while ; and is not the wrath of the eternal God much more dreadful ? for, as we are sinners, our fear is justly increased from the holiness of his nature, the justice of his government, and the threatenings of his laws. But to conclude : as our offences respect men, it is possible we may transgress against them, and they not know it ; one may steal his neighbour's goods, or defile his wife, yet keep it so privately as not to be suspected, and so never to be brought to punishment for it. But this can never be done in regard to God, who knows the most secret thoughts of our hearts ; and consequently tho' we sin never so privately, he is sure to find us out, and will as surely, except we repent in time, punish us for it eternally.

Trust in God. VI. A fifth duty to God is that of TRUST:

The homage due to God in all our wants and dangers, is to trust in him ; whereby we declare our constant dependence upon God for the relief of all our wants and dangers, whether spiritual or temporal, and to support us under all afflictions and temptations, founded in a persuasion of his all-sufficiency, and of his inviolable faithfulness to perform his word and engagements. As far as I trust a man, I suppose him able to do what I trust him for ; that he hath given me some encouragement to believe his willingness, and that he will not deceive me ;

In his power. and it must be so in a regular trust in God, who is able to do for us, exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. But then, 'tis of the utmost concern to us, that we have no expectation from God for things which he

In his truth and promises. hath never promised. Where he has been pleased positively to declare what he will do, we should firmly depend, whatever difficulties or discouragements may lie in the way of our hope. But where his promises are made with a reserve for his own sovereignty, or the

superiority

Superiority of his divine wisdom, as he knows far better than we what is good for man in this life; there we should not allow ourselves to be positive in our expectations of particular events, but cast our cares upon him in a more general manner; relying upon him, that in the way of duty, he will do that which, upon the whole, is best for us to be done.

In all conditions that befall us we must repose ourselves upon God, in confidence of his support and deliverance, of his care and providence to prevent and divert the evils we fear, whether spiritual or temporal; or of his gracious help to bear us up under them; and of his mercy and goodness to deliver us from them, when he sees best; provided always we be careful to do our duty to him. Every man that believes thus of God, as every man must do that believes there is a God, will first apply himself to God, and to beseech him with all earnestness and importunity, that he would permit him to refer his affairs to him, and be pleased to undertake the care of them; and he will, without any demur or difficulty, give up himself wholly to him, to guide and govern him, and to dispose of him as to him should seem best. Therefore if God hath prevented us herein, and, without our desire, taken this care upon himself, we ought to rejoice in it, as the greatest happiness that could possibly have befallen us; and we should, without any further care and anxiety, using our own best diligence, and studying to please him, cheerfully leave ourselves in his hands, with the greatest confidence and security, that he will do all that for us, which is really best; and with a firm persuasion, that that condition, and those circumstances of life, which he shall chuse for us, will be the very same which we would chuse for ourselves, were we endued with the same wisdom. Therefore let it be considered how great a mischief we frequently do ourselves, by loading our minds with a multitude of vexations and tormenting cares, when we may so securely cast our burden upon God. And let us earnestly beg of God, that his watchful and merciful providence would undertake the care of us; that he would fit and prepare us for every condition which he hath designed to bring us into; and that he would teach us to demean ourselves in it as we ought; that he would consider our frailties, and lay no greater load of affliction upon us, than he will give us grace and strength to bear: that if he sees it good to exercise any of us with afflictions and sufferings in any kind, he would make us able to stand in that evil day, and when we have done all, to stand.

And let us be sure to keep within the bounds of our duty, trying no unlawful ways for our ease and preservation, and rescue from the evils which we fear and lie under; for we may assure ourselves that God is never more concerned to appear for us, than

In all our dangers and wants both spiritual and temporal.

Why we should trust in God.

Not seeking to deliver ourselves by any sin

when out of conscience of our duty to him, we are contented rather to suffer, than work our deliverance by undue means. Let us commit ourselves to him in well-doing, and do nothing, no, not for the cause of religion, which is contrary to the plain rules and precepts of it. Should we, instead of vain murmurings, and complaints, and terrifying ourselves with fears of what may never happen, follow the example of holy David, betake ourselves to prayer, and by this means engage the providence of God for our protection from evil, or for our support under it; we should certainly do much better for ourselves, and contribute much more, than we can do any other way, to the prevention of any evil that we can fear, or to the mitigating or shortning of it, as to God's infinite wisdom and goodness shall seem best. To this we are directed by St. Peter, when he exhorts us to cast all our care upon God, who careth for us; according to what he had been taught by our Saviour Christ, who in his divine sermon on the mount says: *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lillies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so cloath the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more cloath you, O ye of little faith? Take therefore no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Matt. vi. 25, &c.*

How we must trust in God.

And we must so trust in God, as to neglect no prudent and lawful means for our security and preservation from evil. Let us not, by our rashness and folly, provoke trouble and danger, and bring them upon ourselves. Let us, according to our Saviour's counsel, be wise as serpents, and innocent as doves. Let us use that care and prudence, which is consistent with innocence and a good conscience; and when we have done that, let us be no farther solicitous, but resign up ourselves, and all our cares, to the good pleasure of God, and the disposal of his wise providence; and leave it to him, who made the world, to govern it; for no doubt he understands it much better than we. Here it cannot be improper to remark,

that

that the vain desire of knowing beforehand things to come, is such a desire of the knowledge of secret things, as is not consistent with our trust in God, nor is it permitted us by the present circumstances and condition of our nature; and it is very observable that those always who have least knowledge of God, and least trust in his providence, and least understanding, have the greatest confidence in groundless pretences and unwarrantable methods of pursuing knowledge; for to pretend to know things by the stars, &c. introduces fatality, and destroys religion; and is a distrust of the Almighty, and not much different from pretending to know them by arts that have worse names. And therefore let me exhort you in the words of St Paul: *Be careful for nothing: but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* Phil. iv. 6.

VII, A sixth duty to God is HUMILITY, or *Humility or that lowliness of mind, which is an entire resignation to the will of God, and a dependence upon God in respect him in all dangers that relate either to our bodies of obedience.* or souls; consisting in the true knowledge of ourselves, and the understanding our own weak and sinful condition; taking to ourselves the shame and confusion due to our follies, and giving God the glory of all the good we receive, or are enabled to do. For he, who desires to be truly humble, and cloathed with humility, must do nothing on purpose to draw the eyes and good opinion of men, but purely to please God: and he must receive from the hands of God all afflictions and trials without murmuring against his justice, so that the submission of a christian consists in a firm persuasion of mind, that nothing happens to us but by the will and permission of God; and that we never presume too much upon the best of our works, (for all our righteousness are as filthy rags; so that when we have done all those things which are commanded, we are no better than unprofitable servants, and again, in being persuaded that he loves us better than we do ourselves, and knows the best methods of making us happy. Such a submission as this will make us easy under the greatest afflictions: and tho' God should visit us with the most intolerable disappointments and losses in this world, it will stop our mouths against providence, because it is the work of God; Or enable us with courage to receive them with the resignation of good old Eli, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* *The unworthiness of our best works.* *Submission in respect of patience.*

Therefore whenever he strikes with the rod of correction, we must not only bear it, as it were, because we can't avoid it, but to our patience let us add our thanks; forasmuch as we having highly provoked his goodness, we are not by his justice given over to

our own hearts lusts; but are still preserved under the wings of his mercy. And this should be so far from causing us to repine against God, that it should raise in us an immediate reformation, repentance, confession, contrition, and full purposes of amendment with satisfaction. For some of the greatest afflictions and calamities of life, are not always real and positive infliction of judgments from the hand of God, but merely the original differences of mens state and circumstances, the variety of God's creation, the different talents committed to mens charge, the different stations God has placed men in for their various trials, and in order to the exercise of a diversity of duties. The like may be said of want of honour and power, want of children to succeed in our estates and families, weakness of body, shortness of life, and the like; nay, and even of spiritual disadvantages themselves likewise; want of capacity and good understanding, want of knowledge and instruction, want of many opportunities and means of improvement which others enjoy.

None of all which are any just ground of complaint against God, or any reason why we should not with all satisfaction acquiesce in his divine good pleasure; since all these things are only different distributions of such free gifts, as he, not being obliged to bestow on any man, may therefore without controversy divide to every man in what measure and proportion he himself thinks fit: only this we may depend upon, that in such measure only will he exact our duty, as he enables us to perform it, and that to whom little is given, of him shall not be much required: and this brings all the seeming inequalities in the world, to a real equality at last.

In his disposals. In all circumstances of life therefore, we are not to be uneasy that God has made us inferior to others; or that he has set before us greater hardships and difficulties to go through; or that he has given us less abilities, and fewer opportunities than others: but we are to apply ourselves wholly, with all resignation, to the proper duties of that station, or of those circumstances, wherein God has been pleased to place us. Even poverty is not an argument to envy the rich; but a strong obligation to study the duties of humility, contentment and resignation: neither is ignorance and want of capacity, meanness of parts and want of instruction, a reason to murmur that God has not entrusted us with more talents; but an admonition to take care that we make a right improvement of those few that are given us. Weakness of body is not a just occasion to repine against God, for not giving us the strength and health wherewith he has blessed some others; but a continual argument to us, to exercise and improve such virtues as are more peculiar to the mind. Lastly, the consideration of the uncertainty and shortness of life itself, ought not to make us spend our time in fruitless complaints

of the vanity and meanness of our state; but to cause us perpetually to consider, that it is not of so great importance how long we live, as how well: and it ought to be a sufficient satisfaction to truly pious and religious persons, that God has reserved for them their portion in another life. Therefore we should be content in every state and condition of life, let whatsoever befall us. How contrary soever to our own inclinations, and how much soever they contradict those proposals of happiness and enjoyment, which we have framed within our own breasts.

Both which parts of christian humility are perfected by a contempt of the world. And the contempt of the world is shewn by looking upon the best of our works to be full of infirmity and pollution, and on all worldly enjoyments as in little and considerable in comparison of the purity and perfection of God, and that happiness, which God hath prepared for those that love him; in being content with that portion of the good things of this life, which the wise providence of God hath allotted to our share; without purchasing the enjoyment of them, by the committing of any wilful sin; without being anxiously concerned for the increase of them, or extremely depressed when they make themselves wings and fly away: in a moderate use of all those lawful pleasures, which relate to the gratification of our senses, and fleshly appetites; as becomes persons who expect their portion, not in the pleasures of this world, but in the happiness of the next: in a low esteem of riches and honour; being ready to forsake them whenever they come in competition with the performance of our duty to God: in bearing the afflictions and calamities of this life with patience and constancy; and looking unto Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith.

Which humble, resigned, and depending frame of mind, is the proper disposition for devotion, and the parent of religious fear. 'Tis the seed-plot of all christian virtues. It makes us ready to receive the revelations of God's will to mankind, and as careful to practise what he enjoins. It restrains the immoderate desire of honour, by teaching us not to exalt ourselves, nor to do any thing through strife or vain glory. It opposes self-love, which is planted in our nature, and when indulged, will be too apt to deceive us in the judgment we form concerning ourselves. It also makes us ready to believe what God reveals, and to pay our due obedience to him, from the sense of our own meanness and his excellency: and by removing the great hindrance of our faith, which is, a vanity to distinguish ourselves, from the unthinking crowd, it makes us put our hope and confidence in God; because being weak and miserable of ourselves, without him we can do nothing. It increases our love to God, by making us sensible how unworthy we are of the least of those many favours we receive from him.

It teaches us to rejoice in the prosperity of our neighbour, by infusing the most favourable opinion of his worth. It disposes us to relieve those wants, and compassionate those afflictions, which we ourselves have deserved. It makes us patient under all the troubles and calamities of life; because we have provoked God

Its use and benefit.

by our sins. And therefore neither prayers nor fasts will find acceptance, unless they proceed from an humble mind; and our best works will stand us in little stead, if they are stained with pride, and boasting of our own strength.

SUNDAY II.

I. *Of the honour due to GOD in his house or church.* II. *By reverencing and maintaining his ministers with tithes and offerings.* III. *By keeping the Lord's day.* IV. *By observing the feasts and V. fasts of the church; whether publick, private, or the fast of Lent.* VI. *In his word, the holy scriptures, or rule of faith, by catechising and preaching.* VII. *In his sacraments; by receiving baptism, and performing the vows and obligations thereof.*

Honour due to I. God.

A Seventh duty to God is HONOUR. For as honour is a duty, which in the nature of things is owing to those that are in a superior relation to us; and as the very notion of it implies it's being due to such; by how much therefore God is infinitely greater than those, whom we acknowledge to be our superiors upon earth, by so much ought we to have a profounder regard and veneration for him.

Several ways of honouring God.

And they honour God, who serve him in spirit and in truth, in all the ways of his appointed worship, and due obedience to his laws, which command us not only to pay this honour immediately to himself, but to have a due esteem for his house, his ministers, his day, word, and sacraments, and for his name, as things that nearly relate or belong to him.

In his house.

First, we must honour God, in his house, that is, in the church, so called upon the account of its peculiar relation to him, being solemnly dedicated and set apart for his publick worship and service; and upon the account of God's peculiar presence, in the administration of his word and sacraments. The dedication of it to sacred uses, makes it properly his own; and the praying to him, praising him, and celebrating the holy mysteries, according to his appointment, are demonstrations of his peculiar presence. And

In what manner.

consequently we ought to reverence God's house, by furnishing it with all decency for the worship of God, by repairing and adorning it, by keeping it from profane and common use, and applying it wholly to the business of religion; by offering up our prayers in it with fervour

and frequency; by hearing God's word with attention and resolutions of obeying it; and by celebrating the holy mysteries with humility and devotion; by using all such outward testimonies of respect as the church enjoins, and are established by the custom of the age we live in, as marks of honour and reverence. This bodily worship is recommended by Solomon, when he charges us to look to our feet when we go to the house of God.

This will correct any whispering, or talking about worldly affairs, any negligent or light carriage: this will suppress any provocations to laughter, or any critical and nice observation of others:

*Directions for
our behaviour
at church.*

And, on the contrary, excite in us sincere intentions of glorifying God, and making his honour and praise known among men; acknowledging hereby our entire dependence upon his bounty, both for what we enjoy, and what we farther expect: and promote hearty endeavours of performing his blessed will, and of being that in our lives and actions, which we beg to be made in our prayers: and teach us to govern our outward behaviour by such measures as the church prescribes, *viz.* to kneel, stand, bow or sit, as the rubrick hath enjoined to be complied with in publick. And all the different postures ought to be used with such gravity and seriousness, as may shew how intent we are when engaged in the worship of God, and yet without such behaviour as may be apt to disturb those that are near us, and to give occasion to others to suspect us, as acting a formal hypocritical part. If we come to church before the service begins (which we should always endeavour to do) after we have performed our private devotions, we should in silence recollect ourselves, and dispose our minds by serious thoughts to a due discharge of the ensuing duties; for the discourses of news and business are improper upon such occasions, God's house being never designed for the carrying on of worldly concerns. And it is still more unbecoming, while we are at our prayers, to observe those rules of ceremony, which in other places are fit to be practised towards one another; because when we are offering our requests to the great God of heaven and earth, our attention should be so fixed, that we should have no leisure to regard any thing else. To this end, when we put our bodies into a praying posture, with which I think leaning and lolling seem very inconsistent, we should do well to fix our eyes downward, that we may not be diverted by any objects near us; at the same time resolving not to suffer 'em to gaze about, whereby they do but fetch in matter for wandering thoughts. This attention will be much improved by silence; therefore we should never pray aloud with the minister but where it is enjoined, endeavouring to make it our own by a hearty *Amen*. Great care must be taken not to repeat after the minister, what peculiarly relates to his office; which I mention the rather, because I have frequently observed some devout people

people following him that officiates in the exhortation and absolution as well as the confession; which, if thoroughly considered, must be judged a very absurd and improper expression of the people's devotion, because it is a distinguishing part of the priest's office. Therefore the best preparation of mind for our joining in the publick prayers, is to abstract our thoughts as much as we can from our worldly business and concerns, that we may call upon God with attention and application of soul; to keep our passions in order and subjection, that none of them may interrupt us when we approach the throne of grace; to possess our minds with such an awful sense of God's presence, that we may behave ourselves with gravity and reverence; to work in ourselves such a sense of our own weakness and insufficiency; as may make us earnest for the supplies of divine grace; such a sorrow for our sins, such humiliation for them, and such a readiness to forgive others, as may prevail upon God for the sake of Christ's suffering to forgive us: to recollect those many blessings which we have received, that we may shew forth his praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service.

In his ministers.

II. *Secondly*, the Almighty is also honoured in his *ministers*, by that love which is due unto them as the stewards of the mysteries of God, and those that watch over our souls. Therefore we ought to shew our love to such as administer to us in holy things, in being ready to assist them in all difficulties, and in vindicating their reputations from those aspersions, which bad men are apt to load them with: In covering their real infirmities, and interpreting all their actions in the best sense; never picking out the faults of a few, and making them a reproach to the whole sacred order.

And as ministers are in a peculiar manner servants of the great God of heaven and earth, to whose bounty we owe all that we

In his possessions.

enjoy; therefore we should dedicate a part of what we receive to his immediate service, as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty and dominion over all. And what makes this duty further reasonable is, that in order to be instruments in God's hands, in procuring our eternal welfare, they renounce all ordinary means of advancing their fortunes; they surrender up their pretensions to worldly interests: and therefore it is highly fit that their laborious and difficult employment, purely for God's glory and our salvation, should receive from us the encouragement of a comfortable and honourable subsistence, upon this and the like considerations. That parents may be encouraged to devote their children of good parts to the service of the altar; for it is not probable they will sacrifice an expensive education to an employment that is attended with small advantages. And if some persons have zeal enough to engage in the ministry without a respect

respect to the rewards of it, yet common prudence ought to put us upon such methods as are most likely to excite men of the best parts and ability to undertake the sacred function; that the best cause may have the best management, and the purest religion the ablest defenders. It is also necessary that their maintenance should bear some proportion to the dignity of their character, and should raise them above the contempt of those who are too apt to be influenced by outward appearances; for tho' wisdom is better than strength, nevertheless, the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard. And farther, that by this means they may be better enabled not only to provide for their families, which is a duty incumbent upon them as well as the rest of mankind, but to be examples to their flock in charity and in doing good, as well as in all other parts of their office and duty. And the wisdom of our christian fore-fathers thought these considerations of *In what manner.* such force, that the government has appointed

for the maintenance of our ministers, the house and glebe*, and the oblations, which were the voluntary offerings of the faithful, very considerable in the primitive times; so that the necessities of the church were liberally supplied from the great bounty of the people; and, when upon the spreading of christianity, a more fixed and settled maintenance was required, yet somewhat of the antient custom was retained in voluntary oblations, besides tithes†, which are the main lawful support of the parish minister; the reason of their payment is founded on the law of God, and their settlement among us hath been by the antient

* These were the original endowment of a church, without which it cannot be supplied; and without which it could not be consecrated; and upon which was founded the original right of a patronage. For it appears from the Lord Coke, that the first king of the realm had all the lands of England in demesne, and Les Grand Manours and Les Royalties they reserved to themselves; and with the remnant they enfeoffed the barons of the realm for the defence thereof, with such jurisdiction as the court baron now hath; and about this time it was, when all the lands of England were the king's demesne, that Ethelwulf, almost nine hundred years since, conferred the tithes of all the kingdom upon the church by his royal charter; which is extant in abbot Ingulph, and in Matthew of Westminster.

† We do not read of tithes paid the apostles, because the zeal of christians in their times was so great, that as many as were possessors of land or houses, sold them, and laid the price of them at the apostles feet; and the devotion of the following ages, even to the latter end of the fourth century, was so remarkable for the liberality of their offerings and oblations, that their bounty to the evangelical priesthood exceeded what the tenth would have been, if they had paid it; so that there was no reason to demand tithes, when men gave a greater proportion of what they possessed; tho' even during those ages, there want not testimonies from the fathers of those times, that tithes were due under the gospel, as well as before and under the law; and that they were paid is plain from the apostolical canons, which provide for the disposal of them.

*The great sin
of sacrilege.*

and undoubted laws of this nation †. Therefore such as by tricks or shifts keep back or refuse to pay tithes in whole or in part, or defraud the clergy of their maintenance, are guilty of that grievous sin of sacrilege, by taking what is set apart for the clergy's subsistence, to employ it in other uses, or to their own particular profit; which is a robbing of God, as the prophet informs us: Will a man rob God? yet ye have robbed me; but ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings, saith the Lord. So that here we are told by God himself, that the withholding tithes is a robbing of him: and what is gotten by such a robbery, the prophet declares in the next verse, Ye are

The punishment.

curfed with a curse; because of such sacred things God is the true and proper owner. And accordingly we read in scripture of severe punishments inflicted on those that were guilty of this sin of sacrilege †.

*The times of
his service.*

III. A third thing whereby we are to shew our honour to God, is to keep holy the *sabbath-day*, and all other times set apart for his service: for as God expects a part of our goods for the maintenance of the settled ministry in his church; so he requires us to honour and express our reverence towards him, by dedicating a particular part of our time to his immediate service. Remember, says he, that thou keep holy the sabbath-day. So, - 22

*Sabbath, why
instituted.*

The ends for which the sabbath was originally instituted, and for which the command was from time to time renewed, were principally as follow: That men might continually commemorate the works of creation, which original reason of the institution of the sabbath is of eternal and unchangeable consideration. Another reason which was added upon occasion of renewing this institution to

† We have shewn upon good authority in the preceding note *, tithes were granted by the bounty and munificence of the first monarchs of this realm to the clergy, out of all the lands in the kingdom, and the perpetual payment thereof laid as a rent-charge for the church on the same, before any part thereof was demised to others: so here let it be also observed, that if perhaps some of the great men of the realm had then estates in absolute property, as it is certain there were very few, if any, that had, they charged the same with tithes by their own consent, before they did transmit them to the hands of the gentry, or any who now claim from them. So that the land being thus charged with the payment of tithes, came with this clog unto the lords and great men of the realm, and hath been so transmitted and passed over from one hand to another, until they came into the possession of the present owners, who must have paid more for the purchase of them, and required larger rents from their tenants, if they had not been thus charged. And whatever right they may have to the other nine parts, either of fee-simple, lease or copy, they have certainly none at all in the tithe or tenth, which is no more theirs, than the other nine parts are the clergy's.

† For further satisfaction, see the duty of the people to their ministers, Sunday 8 § IV.

the

the Jews, was, that they might commemorate their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, which to that people was as it were a new creation. And because it was a manifest contempt of this great deliverance, and a presumptuously wilful despising of a plain command of God, the man in the wilderness, who did but gather sticks upon the sabbath-day, was by God's especial direction commanded to be put to death; and as the moral part of the commandment concerning the sabbath is of perpetual obligation, so the ritual or instituted part, which had relation to the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt, is abolished by the gospel. But then, instead of the Jewish sabbath, there succeeded, by the appointment and practice of the apostles, the commemoration of our Lord's resurrection. Which coming to pass on the first day of the week, the christian Lord's day was accordingly from thenceforth kept on the first day of the week, which we call *Sunday*. Therefore one day in seven must be yielded unto the Lord, and set apart for the exercise of religious duties, both in publick and private. For

*Why changed
into the Lord's
day.*

We must not only rest from the works of our calling, but our time must be employed in all such religious exercises as tend to the glory of God, and the salvation of our own souls. We must regularly frequent the worship of God in the publick assemblies, from which nothing but sickness or absolute necessity should detain us; and there * we are not to talk, or gaze about us, but to join in the prayers of the church, hear his most holy word, receive the blessed sacrament, when administered; and contribute to the relief of the poor, if there be any collection for their support: That we may thereby openly profess ourselves christians, which is one great end of publick assemblies in the service of God. We ought in private to enlarge our ordinary devotions, and to

*How to be
kept.*

In publick.

In private.

make the subject of them chiefly to consist in thanksgivings for the works of creation and redemption, recollecting all those mercies we have received from the bounty of heaven, through the course of our lives: To improve our knowledge, by reading and meditating upon divine subjects; to instruct our children and families; to visit the sick and the poor, comforting them by some seasonable assistance: and if we converse with our friends or neighbours, to season our discourse with prudent and profitable hints for the advancement of piety; and to take care that no fowness or moroseness mingle with our serious frame of mind. From whence we may collect the great advantages of a religious observation of the Lord's day; it keepeth up the solemn and publick worship of God;

Its advantage.

which

* See the worship of God in his house, in page 42.

which might be neglected, if left to depend upon the will of man: it preserveth the knowledge and visible profession of the christian religion in the world; when, notwithstanding the great differences there are among christians in other matters, they yet all agree in observing this day, in memory of our Saviour's resurrection; and it is highly useful to instruct the ignorant by preaching and catechising, and to put those in mind of their duty, who in their prosperity are apt to forget God. Moreover, by spending this day in religious exercise, we acquire new strength and resolution to perform God's will in our several stations for the future.

*In observing
the feasts of
the church.*

IV. Besides this weekly day of the Lord, there are other principal times or days set apart by the church, either for the remembrance of some special mercies of God, such as the birth and resurrection of Christ, the coming down of the holy Ghost from heaven, &c. or in memory of the blessed apostles, and other saints, who were the happy instruments of conveying to us the knowledge of Christ Jesus, by preaching his gospel through the world, and most of them attesting the truth of it with their

*After what
manner.*

blood; which ought to be observed in such a manner as may answer the ends for which they were first appointed; that God may be glorified by an humble and grateful acknowledgment of his mercies; and that the salvation of our souls may be advanced, by believing the mysteries of our redemption; and imitating the examples of those primitive patterns of piety that are set before us. Therefore on these days we should be so far from looking upon them as common days, or make them instruments of vice and vanity, or spend them in luxury and debauchery, intemperance, excess and sensuality, as the manner of some is, who look upon an holiday as designed for a loose to their passions and unbounded pleasures; that our greatest care should be to improve our time in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord, by constantly attending the publick worship, and partaking of the blessed sacrament, if it be administered, and in private by enlarging our devotions, and withdrawing ourselves as much as possible from the affairs of the world, particularly expressing our rejoicing by love and charity to our poor neighbour. If we call to mind any mystery of our redemption, or article of our faith, we ought to confirm our belief of it, by considering all those reasons upon which it is built; that we may be able to give a good account of the hope that is in us. We should from our hearts offer to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and resolve to perform all those duties, which arise from the belief of such an article. If we commemorate any saint, we should consider the virtues for which he was most

distinguished

distinguished, and by what steps he arrived at so great perfection; and then examine ourselves how far we are wanting in our duty; and earnestly beg God's pardon for our past failings, and his grace to enable us to conform our lives to those admirable examples, which they have left for our imitation.

V. As we are thus to express our thankfulness to God for mercies received, and the good examples set before us for our imitation; we are with the same view of honouring God, by acts of humiliation and repentance, to keep holy the *fast-days*, set apart by the church, or by civil authority, or by our own appointment, to humble ourselves before God, in punishing our bodies, and afflicting our souls, in order to a real repentance: by outward tokens testifying our grief for sins past, and by using them as means to secure us from returning to those sins, for which we express so great a detestation. And this must be done, not only by interrupting and abridging the care of our body, but by carefully inquiring into the state of our souls; charging ourselves with all those transgressions we have committed against God's laws; humbly confessing them with shame and confusion of face, with hearty contrition and sorrow for them; praying that God will not suffer his whole displeasure to arise, and begging him to turn away his anger from us; by interceding with him for such spiritual and temporal blessings upon ourselves, and others, as are needful and convenient; by improving our knowledge in all the particulars of our duty; by relieving the wants and necessities of the poor, that our humiliation and prayers may find acceptance with God. And, if the fast be publick, we must attend the publick places of God's worship, always taking particular care to avoid all vanity, and valuing ourselves upon such performances; and therefore, in our private fasts, we must not proclaim them to others by any outward shew, that we may not appear unto men to fast. We must not despise or judge our neighbour, who doth not, and it may be hath not, the same reason to tie himself up to such methods. We must not destroy the health of our bodies by too great austerity, lest thereby we make them unfit instruments for the improvement of our minds, or the discharge of our worldly employments. A particular care ought to be taken that we do not grow thereby morose and sour, peevish and fretful towards others, which severity to ourselves may be apt to incline us to; for that is so far from expressing our repentance, that it makes fresh work for it by increasing our guilt. And therefore, when thou fastest, be not as the hypocrites are, of a sad countenance, &c. Wherefore,

The Church of Christ having in all ages appointed solemn fasts to be observed by her members upon particular occasions,

The fast of Lent.

we still retain some of them; amongst which the fast of *Lent* deserves our particular regard; concerning which I would have you make these observations. As to the limitation of time for the keeping of this fast, the church had, I suppose, a respect to the particular space of time wherein our Saviour fasted, which was forty days, as what was esteemed a proper penitential season; and as to the intention, end, or design of this fast of *Lent*, it is set apart as a proper season for mortification, and the exercise of self-denial; to humble and afflict ourselves for our sins; not by endeavouring to fast continually forty days, but, by frequent fastings, as may be learnt from the practice of the church in all ages: and to punish our too often abuses of God's creatures, by abstinence, and by forbearing the lawful enjoyment of them; to form and settle firm purposes of holy obedience; to pray frequently to God both in private and publick for pardon, and his holy spirit; to put us in mind of that sore trial and temptation, which Christ then endured for our sakes; particularly to perpetuate the memory of our Saviour's sufferings; and to make, as it were, a publick confession of our belief, that he died for our salvation: And consequently, for fitting ourselves to receive the tokens and pledges of his love, with greater joy and gladness. 25

How to be observed.

Wherefore this christian institution of *Lent* ought to be spent in fasting, and in abstinence, according to the circumstances of our health, and outward condition in the world; and this with a design to deny and punish one's self, and to express our humiliation before God for past transgressions: the ornament of attire may be laid aside: the frequency of receiving and paying visits may be interrupted: publick assemblies for pleasure and diversion should be avoided: our retirements should be filled with reading pious discourses, and with frequent prayer, and with examining the state of our minds: and the publick devotion, and those instructing exhortations from the pulpit, which are so generally established in many churches in this season, should be constantly attended. Besides, we should be liberal in our alms, and very ready to employ ourselves on all opportunities of relieving either the temporal or spiritual wants of our neighbour: For the Lord says by the prophet *Isaiah*, Is not this the fast I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh, ch. *lviii.* ver 6, 7.

VI. *Fourthly*, we are in a more especial manner to express our reverence to God by honouring his HOLY WORD; and we honour his holy word by hearing, reading, and practising, what is therein contained for our comfort and instruction. This word of God is commonly called by way of eminence *the holy scriptures*, which we are obliged to search, because they contain the terms and conditions of our common salvation; without the knowledge and practice of which we can never attain happiness. I say, whatever is necessary for us to know and believe, to hope for and practise in order to salvation, is fully contained in those holy books. This then is the rule of our faith. Every doctrine that is there delivered we must believe: but as for any doctrine that is not there plainly delivered, nor can be clearly deduced from thence, we are not bound to believe that as an article of faith, let it come ever so well recommended. The things declared in scripture to be the terms and conditions of salvation, are repentance from all wicked works, and faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ; the belief of a resurrection from the dead, and of a judgment to come; and a life of virtue, or suitable obedience to our Lord's express commands in the gospel: And

*God must be
honoured in his
word.*

*The holy scrip-
tures.*

*The rule of
faith:*

Those necessary things are there treated with so much plainness and clearness, as to be sufficiently understood by those, who make a right use of their reason, and read them with that respect and reverence, which is due to the oracles of God; with humility and modesty, from a sense of our own weakness and God's perfection; and with earnest prayer for the divine assistance: moreover, they who expect to reap benefit by reading the holy scriptures must diligently consider the design of the author of each book of scripture; and what is the subject he chiefly handles; with the occasion of his writing; must explain difficult places by those that are more clear; distinguish between literal and figurative expressions; and never have recourse to metaphors and figures, but what somewhat absurd arises from their being taken in a proper and literal sense; must confine themselves to the natural signification of words, the usual forms of speech, and the phrase of scripture; must acquaint themselves with the common usages and customs of those times in which they were writ, to which many expressions allude; must not make either side of the question in dispute, the reason of our interpretation, for this is to make it a rule of interpreting scripture, not a question to be decided by it; and again, they must apply general rules to particular cases, it being impossible scripture should comprehend all special cases, which are infinite. And, where

*How to be
read.*

sulting those primitive and faithful witnesses, who learnt the true sense of scripture from the authors themselves. Without some such method, no author can be well understood; and it is for this reason that I would exhort a diligent and constant attendance to hear this word explained and enforced in *catechising* and *preaching*: For

In catechising. First, CATECHISING is a peculiar method of teaching the ignorant by question and answer; adapted to the meanest capacities, for their more ready instruction in the first and necessary rules or principles of our holy religion; and is of very antient date in the practice of the christian church. And as to the great usefulness of it, catechising hath a particular advantage as to children: because they are subject to forgetfulness, and want of attention. Now catechising is a good remedy against both these; because, by questions put to them, children are forced to take notice of what is taught, and must give some answer to the question that is asked: and a catechism being short, and containing in a little compass the necessary principles of religion, it is the more easily remembered. Again, the great usefulness, and indeed the necessity of it, plainly appears by experience; for as Solomon observes, Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it; so it very seldom happens, that children, which have not been catechised, have any clear and competent knowledge of the principles of religion ever after; and, for want of this, are incapable of receiving any great benefit by preaching, which supposes persons to be in some measure instructed before-hand in the main principles of religion. Besides, if they have no principles of religion fixed in them, they become an easy prey to seducers. And therefore

A duty on parents and masters, &c.

I would recommend this way of instruction to parents and masters of families, with respect to their children and servants. For I do not think that this work should lie wholly upon ministers. You must do your part at home, who, always living with your families, have better and more easy opportunities of fixing the principles of religion upon your children and servants. Neither must such as have been so unfortunate as to grow in years without this instruction, suppose they are exempt from it; for as soon as they are able to see their own danger and discover their own ignorance, they must apply in good earnest to this means of obtaining the first things to be known in the christian religion. Therefore, whoever he be, of what age and condition soever, that finds his own ignorance in the mysteries of his religion and service of God, or in any such degree thereof, as he feels a want of any part of necessary saving knowledge, let him, as he loves his soul, and would rescue it from eternal death, seek out for instruction,

instruction, first by the means of catechising, and then he shall profit thro' God's grace by the word preached.—For

Secondly, PREACHING is a publishing of God's mercy, favour, blessings, grace and pro- *In preaching.*

mises to those who love him and keep his commandments, and a declaration of those threats and punishments recorded in the word of God against the obstinate and evil doer. It's use is to put us in mind of our duty, and to exhort and assist us to withstand those lusts and temptations, which set us at enmity with God: Consequently, we honour God by attending to his holy word, read and preached *The use of Sermons.*

to us, with a resolution of mind to perform what we shall be convinced is our duty; with such a submission of our understanding, as is due to the oracles of God; and with a particular application of general instructions to the state of our own minds, that we may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God the Father, and of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Therefore, at hearing the word preached, we should give our attention with great re- *How to be heard.* verence, and take heed how we hear, lest our negligence be interpreted as a contempt of that authority which speaks to us; and not as the manner of some is, who at church place their publick worship, not in their hearts and knees, but in lolling, gazing, and unseemly gestures; and employ their ears, the channel by which faith is conveyed into our souls, not to hear their duty, but to find some unreasonable fault with their teacher: For, instead of improving the word of God preached for their instruction, when they return home, their whole discourse turns upon the man, and not his sermon. And such hearers never want subject of complaint against the preacher, that they may in some measure screen their own neglect of duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves. Thus at one time they find fault with his memory, because too short; or with his sentences, because too long: if he be young, they despise his youth, and say that he does but prate: if he is aged, they seldom scruple to term his zeal for their souls, and good instructions, the dictates of one in his dotage, that knows not what he says. Again, if he preaches in a plain style suitable to weak capacities, they call him a sloven, a bad master of language: if he is solid, then he preaches flat: but if he be not plain, then he is too witty; and if not solid, he is certainly accused of levity, and ridiculing the word of God: if he be unlearned, they justly say he is not worthy of so great a calling; and if he be endued with the qualifications of a good pastor and teacher, he is immediately proclaimed unfit for so plain and ignorant a people. In fine, when the sermon must be confessed to be very excellent, then they say he preaches for

gain ; and if it be but ordinary, they cry, they can read as good at home. But now

The danger of such hearers.

What can be thought to be the end of such men ? God may justly give them up to a reprobate sense, and withdraw that grace, which they have abused ; and then it is no wonder they turn the most serious things into ridicule, and hear the terrors of the Lord without the least sense of their own guilt. Pray God this may not be the case of many, who stay from church under a pretence that they cannot benefit under such and such a minister ! And let not those, who constantly attend on stated days, to hear God's word preached, and still continue in their habitual sins, think they have honoured God ; no. The way to reverence God by honouring his word, is not to imagine, when they have been affected with a sermon, that the great end of hearing is fulfilled :

The end of hearing a good sermon.

for we must apply those good instructions and exhortations in such a manner as to enable us to conquer our most secret sins. Sins are the distempers of the soul, and God has prescribed this as a means of it's cure ; therefore as no patient can hope for the cure of his bodily infirmities by talking with, or only looking upon the physician and his prescriptions and medicines ; so neither can any one hope to be released of his sins, that never applies God's word to enable him to eschew evil, and to do good. The main matter then of hearing a sermon, is the putting useful instructions into practice ; for when God enlightens our minds, it is our business to walk as children of light. We must never despair of conquering our evil habits, nor be discouraged in prosecuting the convictions of our own consciences ; for a mighty resolution, with the assistance of God's grace, will overcome great difficulties. Let us therefore never measure our godliness by the number of sermons which we are present at, as if that outward mark of reverence to God was any sure mark of a good christian : But let us estimate our obedience to God, and reformation of our manners, by the quantity of the good fruit, which the dew of God's grace has, through the ministration of the word, enabled us to bring forth ; without which disposition of the heart, all our hearing will only draw the heavier judgments of God upon us ; because we hear and know our master's will, and do it not. But,

Honour due to God in his sacraments.

VII. *Fifthly*, The great mark of a christian's duty to God, is the honouring him in his SACRAMENTS of baptism and the Lord's-supper, which are “ outward visible signs of inward and spiritual grace,

A sacrament, what.

“ given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and as a pledge to assure us thereof.” In which description we are taught, that to constitute a sacrament, there must be,

first,

first, some visible sign of it, apparent to our senses. *Secondly*, this sign must represent some spiritual grace and favour vouchsafed us by God. *Thirdly*, that outward sign must be of Christ's own institution; and, *fourthly*, appointed by him as the means of conveying to us this inward grace, and as a seal and token of assurance, that he will bestow the one upon those who do worthily receive the other. And we are not to doubt, but that, in the right use of the outward signs of water, bread and wine, he will, by the power of his Spirit, though in a manner unknown, because not necessary to be revealed to us, convey, and confirm, in baptism, and in the Lord's supper, to the worthy receivers thereof, the divine grace signified, according to his own most true promise and engagement. And therefore we must consider both these sacraments under those particular properties. And, *first*, concerning baptism.

BAPTISM delivers us from the vengeance of God, by cleansing us from the guilt and power of sin; by taking us into a covenant of grace and favour with God; and by infusing a principle of new life into our souls, to enable us to live according to God's laws: and to attain that everlasting happiness, which is the free gift of God in Christ. Or, as our church-office explains it, "baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him, that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." Yet we must not dare to take upon us to exclude any from all hopes of God's mercy in extraordinary cases, as the want of opportunity, or capacity of receiving it: To pronounce positively of their salvation we have no warrant; because the promises of salvation, as the gospel declares them to us (and we have no promises of salvation but in the gospel) are only made to those that believe in Jesus Christ, and enter into his covenant by baptism. On the other side, to pronounce of their damnation, seems very harsh and uncharitable; nor do I know that any in the scripture are threatened with damnation, but such as reject the gospel, after it is preached to them, or dishonour their profession after they have embraced it, by a wicked unholy life; neither of which can be said of those we are now speaking of. We ought therefore to leave them to the uncovenanted mercies of God, if I may so speak. For this we are certain of, that the judge of all the world will do right: Nor will he demand the tale of bricks where he hath allowed no straw to make them. But as the Jews were obliged, under the severest penalty, to be circumcised, and keep the passover; so our guilt and danger will be proportionably great, by not receiving baptism, when it is in

our power, it being of the highest authority, and the distinguishing badge, of, as well as admission into our most excellent profession. And since we are the offspring of Adam, and consequently subject to death by his fall, how can we be made partakers of that redemption which Christ hath purchased for the children of God, if they do not enjoy the advantage of that method, which is alone appointed by Christ for them to become members of God's kingdom? For, Jesus himself hath assured us, Except one be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. And

Its vows, to renounce

Therefore it was the constant custom of the primitive church to administer baptism to infants for the remission of sins, by and under such conditions, vows, or obligations, to which they were to consent, and according to which they were to endeavour to regulate their conduct through this world in their way to heaven. And this practice was esteemed by the best tradition to be derived from the apostles themselves, and is therefore still retained and enjoined by our church, which obliges all persons coming to be baptized, either by themselves or sureties, to promise and vow, "that they will renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; to believe all the articles of the christian faith; and to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life."

The devil,

Where, by the *devil* we mean all the fallen angels, of which one is chief prince, or head; that great enemy of Christ and his church, who having seduced our first parents, hath ever since had, through God's permission, a great power in the world, and still seeketh our destruction, by tempting us to sin, and then accusing us to God for it. And the

His works.

works of the devil are all wickednesses and vices, but in particular, all idolatry, witchcraft, fortune-telling, and dependence on the creatures: and especially the crimes of which the devil is principally guilty, and tempts men to; such as pride, envy, murder in fact or in the heart, lying, deceiving, and misleading, especially in matters of religion. And when we renounce the devil and all his works, we reject and withstand that usurped power and dominion, which he exercises in the world, we resist his personal temptations, and engage in no kind to be partakers of his crimes, as we would not share in his punishment.

The world,

By renouncing the *pomps* and *vanities* of this wicked world, christians absolutely renounce the yielding themselves up to all excess either in diet, sports, or apparel; and the setting their hearts upon wealth or greatness of the world, or on those customs and practices of worldly men, which are in themselves sinful: and they so far renounce the ho-

nours

nours and riches of the world, as not to be ambitious of the former, nor covetous of the latter ; and, in general, do hereby look upon themselves debarred from having more to do, than what is necessary, with any thing in the world, which may be like to prove an occasion of sin to them, or that may probably tend to turn them from God, and draw off their mind from the other world.

As to the sinful lusts of the *flesh*, they are thus *The flesh*. reckoned up ; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred and variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like : and consequently, to renounce all the sinful lusts of the flesh, is to avoid adultery and fornication, rioting and drunkenness, and all that filthiness of the flesh and spirit, which is inconsistent with christian purity, and will render us unclean in God's sight. Finally, christians in their baptism absolutely renounce all desires whatsoever, which fasten upon any forbidden, and therefore unlawful object : so as never to give any indulgence, or consent to them, much less must they follow, or be led by them to the commission of any sinful act.

By the ARTICLES of the *christian faith* we *To believe the* are to understand all those doctrines of religion, *christian faith*. for which we have the authority of Christ and his apostles, the fundamental points whereof are summed up in that form of sound words, which, because it contains the heads of the doctrine preached by the apostles, and was compiled, for the most part, in or near their times, is called the *apostles creed* : To which we are not only to assent, but are also strictly obliged by our baptismal vow to learn them, both as to the words and meaning of them. For, the nature of that faith, which we are to give to the articles of our creed, is such an assent as must be sincerely from the heart, according to that saying in the viiith chapter of the Acts, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized ; it must be active, and work by love, and stedfast without wavering : not only believing the great benefits and promises of God to mankind, but gratefully accepting of the same, by a dutiful obedience and resignation to God through Christ ; otherwise it will little avail us to believe all the articles of the christian faith.

By the promise to keep God's holy will and *To keep God's* commandments, we are bound by vow to yield an *commandments*. universal obedience unto, and to keep as long as we live our good resolutions ; not to break, but to keep the ten commandments of the moral law ; under which are included all those particular precepts of the Old and New Testaments, which are reducible to one or other of those heads : for, as Je-
sus

sus himself observes, On these commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

The obligation Thus I have shewn you the nature of the vows of these vows. in baptism; and now I must inform you, that except a christian, when arrived at years of understanding, shall believe and do as promised by his sureties in baptism, he will certainly forfeit all the benefits thereof; which are, the gracious promises of pardon and forgiveness of sin upon our true repentance, the assistance of God's blessed spirit, and the influences of his grace to enable us to work out our salvation: The benefit of Christ's intercession in heaven, where he is an advocate for us with the father: A share in all those promises of care and protection made to the church; and an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Because the benefits promised by God in baptism are that part of God's covenant with man, which we have no reason to hope we shall obtain, till we comply with our promises made to him in that sacrament; which by God's help we are always able to do: for God can never be supposed to command or require more of us, than what he enables us to perform: and therefore, both in justice, and regard of our own interest, we are bound to stand to this covenant, which was made in our name by our godfathers and godmothers; because they promised no more than what is implied in the very nature of baptism. All mankind are in the hands of God's unlimited goodness; yet his covenanted mercies are the peculiar lot and portion of christians, the members of Christ's holy church, who honour God by a due discharge of those things promised in baptism; of which promises you have already been taught what that first vow obliges us to renounce; namely, the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. And therefore, let us now proceed to inquire what that faith is, to which we give our assent, when we profess to believe all the articles of the christian faith; of all which articles we shall treat, after that I have laid down some instructions concerning divine revelation, and given some convincing reasons for its certainty.

SUNDAY III.

- I. *Of divine revelation, and its evidences and excellency.* II. *Of faith in one GOD.* III. *The Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.* IV. *Of GOD's providence, and of chance or fortune and fate.* V. *Of the Trinity, or three persons in the Godhead.* VI. *Of faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord; an objection against this faith answered.* VII. *The angel's message to the virgin Mary; and* VIII. *Of the incarnation and birth of Christ.*

- I. **C**ONCERNING a divine revelation, the proofs *Of divine re-*
are three: *velation*
person

person inspired : *secondly*, to those that receive the matter revealed from the persons inspired : *thirdly*, to those that live remote from the age of the inspired persons , as is the case of all christians since the times of Christ, and the apostles his successors. For if the Almighty vouchsafeth to make a revelation, or manifest and discover any truth or thing to a man, of which he was before ignorant ; it is very reasonable to think, that he will satisfy the person concerning the reality of it ; for, it cannot signify any thing, or have any effect upon the man, unless he be satisfied it is such. And

The assurance of a divine revelation, as to the person himself, is most probably wrought by the great evidence it carries of its divine original. *Its inward evidences.*

In God's manifesting himself to the prophets, there was such a powerful representation on the part of the messenger of God's will, and that clearness of perception on the part of the person inspired, or to whom he was sent, as did abundantly make good those phrases of *vision* and *voice*, by which it is described in scripture : And sometimes there was added some sign or supernatural proof ; as in the case of *Gideon* * and *Moses* †. By which examples you may perceive, why a good man has that certainty which the deluded person wants ; because a good man, when he is inspired, and reflects upon it, and diligently considers the assurance which he finds in his mind, can give a rational account of it to himself, which the deluded person cannot have ; whose positiveness often riseth from pride and self-conceit, which have no small influence ; but more especially from a disordered imagination or fancy, which interrupts the operations of the mind ; whereas a real inspiration will bear the test of the prophet's reason, and the people's examination.

Again ; the truth of such a revelation may be judged of, from the reasons why we ought to believe the persons pretending to inspiration, whose known probity and approved integrity clears them from all suspicion of imposture ; and whose prudence and understanding sets them above being deceived : Also from the extraordinary evidence and testimony of miracles ; the prediction of future events, and above all from the matter of the revelation ; which, when it concerns mankind in general, must be worthy of God, as proceeding from him, and must tend to the advantage, the satisfaction, and happiness of mankind, to whom the revelation is made : for justice, holiness, and goodness, are as necessary and as essential to our thoughts of God, as power ; and consequently, a revelation that contradicts these attributes, cannot come from the father of truth. And the necessity and reasonableness of this evidence shews *Its outward evidences.* *Sufficient to convict.*

it

The WHOLE DUTY of MAN. [SUNDAY. 3.]

it to be a proof of the highest nature; for it being such as every man, who is a master of sense and reason, can judge of, truly it is what every man ought to be determined by. For, as in all other things, which have been done at a great distance of time, so the evidence necessary to satisfy us of the truth, and to oblige us to believe that revelation to be sent from God by divers persons, and in divers manners, is the credible report of eye and ear witnesses concerning the miracles that have been wrought, and the predictions which have been foretold, to prove persons inspired, conveyed down to us in such a manner, and with such evidence, as that we have no reason to doubt of the truth of them: besides the inward evidence of the christian revelation confirms the outward evidence that was given to it; for as it excells all other forms of religion, that ever appeared in the world, so it is every way worthy of God, entirely beneficial to his creatures, and agreeable to the best reason and sense of human

Its excellency. nature. And where there is the addition of any doctrine, which natural reason could not discover, it is so far from contradicting the plain and evident sense of mankind, that upon consideration it appears highly useful to us in the state in which we now are. For the great fears and doubts of mankind, concerning the way of appeasing the offended justice of God, are removed, and the dishonour that was done to his justice and holiness is satisfied by the death of Christ.

Through Jesus Christ. The christian religion proposes a reward, excellent in itself, and lasting in its duration; and clearly and plainly revealed. The precepts, laid

down for the direction of our lives, comprehend all sorts of virtue, that relate either to GOD, or to our neighbour, or to ourselves; they have cleared what was doubtful by the light of nature, and have made the improvements of it necessary parts of our duty. It supplies us with powerful assistance for the performance of our obedience; light for our dark minds; strength for our weak resolutions; and courage under all our difficulties; and above all, sets before us an exact and perfect pattern for our instruction and encouragement. So that the christian revelation in itself, as well as the external evidence, prove its original to be

It demands our belief. from God. Hence consider the great guilt of those, who reject the christian revelation; for they resist the utmost evidence, that any religion

is capable of receiving both from its inward value, and from that outward attestation that God hath been pleased to give it, by miracles and prophecies; and consequently, by this act of theirs, they condemn themselves, because they reject the only means of their salvation, though it is supported by all the faith of history and uninterrupted records; which is all the evidence in such circumstances, that can be presumed necessary, or can possibly be had; which, therefore, is sufficient to inspire us with the know-

edge of God, and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord, and with a thankful remembrance of all things they have done and promised to us, and an abhorrence of all that shall from scripture appear to be displeasing to the Almighty. For

II. When we in the first ARTICLE of our Creed profess a belief in *one God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth*, we not only declare that we acknowledge him to be the Lord, and that he has revealed his will to us to guide us in the way of

The Christian faith in one God.

truth, but that he has reserved some things to himself, of which, as they regard not the creature, he hath made no revelation, as namely, the manner how there can be three persons in one God, how the divine and human nature could be united in one person, Christ Jesus, or how a virgin could conceive and bear a son without the knowledge of a man. Therefore, when we say *I believe in one God*, let it not be such a belief only as the heathens, or those who only follow the dictates of nature, have, who collect from the things that are seen the eternal power and godhead; but it must be that christian faith, which believes there are three distinct persons in one God, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, who is the *one* only living and true God;

The Father.

existing of himself, by the necessity of his own nature; absolutely independent, eternal, omnipresent, unchangeable, incorruptible; without body, parts or passions; of infinite power, knowledge, and wisdom; of perfect liberty, and freedom of will; of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other possible perfections, so as to be absolutely self-sufficient to his own infinite and unalterable happiness. And if so, it will certainly follow that this same supreme self-existent cause and Father of all things did before all ages, in an incomprehensible manner, by his almighty power and will, beget or

The Son.

produce a divine person, styled the *Word*, or *Wisdom*, or *Son of God*; begotten not made; God of God, in whom dwells the fulness of divine perfections, the image of the invisible God; the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; having been in the beginning with God, partaker with him of his glory before the world was; the upholder of all things by the word of his power; and himself over all God blessed forever. In like manner, what has been said of the Son, may with little variation be, very agreeably to right reason, understood concerning the original procession or manner of derivation of the *Holy Ghost* from the Father and the Son.

The Holy Ghost.

As we believe God to be *one*, so we believe him to be in such a manner one, that there cannot possibly be another; for all other beings must derive their being from him, and whatsoever being has its existence from another, cannot be God, but must be a creature. And this unity of God is

But one God.

of universal obligation to be believed, that we may be fixed as to the object of our worship, and place our religious adoration there only, where 'tis due: and also that we may give him that honour, which is due to him alone; part whereof is, that we have no other gods but one: for this is the ground of all religion; him only must we serve, because he only is God; in him only must we trust, because he only is our rock: to him only must we direct our devotions, because he only knows the hearts of the children of men: him must we love with all our heart, because he only has infinite goodness, mercy, beauty, glory, and excellency. And,

III. The same reason that demands our believing one God, obliges us to believe that one God to be *the Father*; for unto us there is but one God the Father by creation; as also in respect of his conservation, as a man is said to be the Father of him whom he educates. Likewise in respect of redemption from a state of misery to a happy condition; for he is the true Father, whose word it is, even the Father of lights, who of his own will begat us with the word of truth. Thus whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, is God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works. Finally, in respect of adoption; thus it is said, that he hath predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and that we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. Yet still there is a higher and more proper notion of God's paternity, in respect whereof he is the Father of Christ; by whom he is sometimes called the Father, sometimes *my*, sometimes *your*, but never *our* Father. Christ is the beloved, the first-born, the only begotten, God's own Son; and we are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

The perpetual obligation for us to believe that God is our Father, appears in that it is the ground of our filial love, fear, honour, and obedience; gives life to our devotions, assurance to our petitions, being directed, in obedience to our Saviour's commands, to God as our Father; sweetens our afflictions, and his fatherly corrections; and the assurances of his love and pity to us infer the necessity of our endeavouring to imitate him, to be holy as he is holy, merciful as he is merciful, and perfect as he is perfect.

When we say that he is *Almighty*, we profess God's absolute authority, in respect of making whatsoever he pleaseth in such manner as best pleaseth himself: in respect of possessing and governing all things so made by him; which right is independent, as being received from none, and is the sole fountain of all such right in any other: infinite in respect of the object, as extending to all things in heaven and earth; and in respect of the fulness of it, as being absolute and supreme, far above what the potter hath over his clay; and in respect of its continuance, as being all-powerful and eternal. And we must believe this dominion to work in us an awful reverence

rence of his majesty, and an entire subjection to his will : to breed in us patience under our sufferings, and to make us thankful for mercies received, as knowing, that they justly might have been denied us ; we having no manner of right to claim them, as a debt from our Creator.

The whole world, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that are therein, were created and made by the same God, and this, through *The creation of the world.* the operation of his Son, that divine Word, or wisdom of the Father, by whom the scripture says, that God made the world, and all things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers ; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist ; and without him was not any thing made that was made : all this likewise is very agreeable to sound and unprejudiced reason. For that, neither the whole, nor any part of the world ; neither the form, nor motion, nor matter of the world, could exist of itself, by any necessity in its own nature, can be sufficiently proved from undeniable principles of reason : consequently both the whole world, and all the variety of things that now exists therein, must of necessity have received both their being itself, and also their form and manner of being from God, the alone supreme and self-existent cause ; and must needs depend upon his good pleasure every moment for the continuance and preservation of that being. Consequently, the learned of all ages have unanimously agreed that the world evidently owes both its being and preservation to God.

IV. And this all-wise and almighty Creator, *God's providence.* who made all things by the word of his power, and upholds and preserves them by his continual help, does also by his all-wise *providence* perpetually govern and direct the issues and events of all things ; takes care of this lower world, and of all (even the smallest things) that are therein ; disposes things in a regular order and succession in every age, from the beginning to the end of the world ; and inspects, with a more particular and special regard, the moral actions of men : this, as it is far more expressly, clearly, and constantly taught in scripture, than in any of the writings of the most learned men ; so it is also highly agreeable to right and true reason. For, that a being which is always present and infinitely wise, cannot but know every thing that is done in every part of the world, and with equal ease take notice of the very least things as of the greatest ; that an infinitely powerful being must needs govern and direct every thing in such manner, and to such ends as he knows to be best and fittest in the whole, so far as is consistent with that liberty of will, which he has given to all rational creatures ; and that an infinitely just and good Governor cannot

cannot but take more particular and exact notice of the moral actions of all mankind, and how far they are conformable or not conformable to the rules he has set them ; all this (I say) is most evidently agreeable to sound reason. So that

What men vulgarly call *chance* or unforeseen *accident*, is in scripture always declared to be the determinate counsel and providence of God. When a person is slain by chance or accident, as men vulgarly speak, the scripture more accurately expresses it, saying, that God *delivered* such a one *into the hand* of him that slew him without design ; Exod. xxi 13. And in *all other* instances, the same notion is every where kept up in scripture : neither is it merely in a pious manner of expression, that the scripture ascribes every event to the providence of God ; but it is strictly and philosophically true in nature and reason, that there is no such thing as chance or accident ; it being evident that those words do not signify any thing really existing, any thing that is truly an agent or the cause of any event ; but they signify merely men's ignorance of the real and immediate cause. And this is so true, that very many, even of those who have no religion, nor any sense at all of the providence of God, yet know very well, by the light of their own natural reason, that there neither is nor can be any such thing as chance, that is, any such thing as an effect without a cause ; and therefore what others ascribe to chance, they ascribe to the operation of *necessity* or *fate*. But fate also is itself in reality as truly nothing as chance is. Nor is there in nature any other proper cause of any event ; but only the free will of rational and intelligent creatures acting within the sphere of their limited faculties, and the supreme power of God, directing, by his omnipresent providence, the inanimate motions of the whole material and unintelligent world.

V. We believe the Father, Son, and Holy *Three persons* Ghost, to be *three distinct persons* in the divine *in the Godhead*. nature ; because the holy scriptures in several places distinguish them from one another, as we use in common speech to distinguish three several persons : this is recorded in the form of administering the sacrament of baptism, which is in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; and in the solemn blessing with which St. Paul concludes his second epistle to the Corinthians ; The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost : and also the three witnesses in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, prove that each of these persons is God : besides, the names, properties, and operations of God are attributed to each of them in holy writ. That the names, properties, and operations of God, are attributed to the second person in the blessed Trinity, the Son, is plain from St. John, the Word was God. St. Paul says, that God was mani-

fest

Tested in the flesh : that Christ is over all, God blessed for ever ; and that the word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Eternity is attributed to him ; the Son hath life in himself, he is the same and his years shall not fail : perfection of knowledge ; as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father : the creation of all things ; all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. And we are commanded to honour the Son as we honour the Father : and the glorified saints sing their hallelujahs, as to God the Father, so also to the Lamb for ever and ever. And

We ascribe the same names, properties, and operations of God, to the third person in the blessed Trinity, the Holy Ghost ; for, lying to the Holy Ghost, is called lying to God. And, because the christians are the temples of the Holy Ghost, they are said to be the temples of God : his teaching all things ; his guiding into all truth ; his telling things to come ; his searching all things, even the deep things of God ; his being called the Spirit of the Lord, in opposition to the spirit of man ; are plain characters of his divinity. Besides, he is joined with God the Father (who will not impart his glory to another) as an object of faith and worship in baptism, and the apostolical blessing. And, the blasphemy committed against him, is said to be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come.

These plain texts shew we are obliged to believe the doctrine of the holy Trinity, and our church affirms there is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible ; and in the unity of this Godhead, there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* Which doctrine of the *Trinity*, tho' it is above reason, in that we cannot comprehend the manner of it, is not however contrary to reason ; neither does it imply a contradiction to say, the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. Because we do not affirm they are one and three in the same respect. The divine being is that alone which makes God ; that can be but one, and therefore there can be no more Gods than one ; but because the scriptures, which assure us of the unity of the divine being, do likewise with the Father join the Son and Holy Ghost, in the same attributes, operations, and worship, as proved above ; therefore, they are capable of number as to their relation to each other, but not as to their being, which is but one. Consequently the difficulty, which some men pretend they find in the belief of a Trinity, is the effect of

Why to be believed.

* See the first *Article of Religion*.

their own presumption and ignorance, who pretend to dive into the secret things of God by the weakness of human capacity; and because they cannot unfold the depths of divine wisdom, they charge God foolishly with contradiction: but this

How to be inquired into. should teach us to submit our reason to the obedience of faith. To believe what we are sufficiently assured God hath revealed, though we cannot comprehend it.

To contain ourselves within the bounds of sobriety, without wading too far into abstruse, curious, and useless inquiries. To admire and adore the most glorious Trinity, as being the joint authors of our salvation. To acknowledge the extreme love of God towards us, in giving his only begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father from all eternity, to die for us sinners; and the wonderful condescension of our dear Redeemer, the merits of whose sufferings were made of more value by the dignity and excellence of his person: and never to grieve that eternal spirit, by whose gracious help we are made partakers of life everlasting. Where

Does not take away the use of reason.

Observe, in answer to a very popular argument against christianity, That to believe such doctrines of christianity as we cannot comprehend, does not destroy the use of reason in religion; for nothing can be a greater reflection upon religion, than to say it is unreasonable, that it contradicts that natural light which God hath fixed in our minds, and that it declines a fair and impartial trial, and will not bear the test of a thorough examination. For, God enlightened man with reason to discover the grounds of natural religion, and inculcate the wisdom and prudence of acting according to them. Reason shews the conveniency of things to our natures, and the tendency of them to our interest and happiness; since as we are thereby convinced, that piety towards God, that justice, gratitude, and mercy towards men, are agreeable to our natures; so reason discovers to us that these duties are good, because they bring benefit and advantage to us. And this reason is the faculty whereby the evidence and proof of revealed religion is to be tried: the proper exercise of it in a christian is to examine and inquire whether what is proposed and required to be believed, is revealed by God; whether it comes with the true marks of his authority, and hath him really for its author? for, our accepting of any thing as revealed by God, must be grounded upon evidence that it comes from him. And when by proper arguments we are convinced of the divine authority of the revelation, reason assists us in discerning the true and genuine sense of such a revelation, and helps us to apply general rules contained in it, to all manner of special cases whatsoever. And when we are satisfied that a doctrine is revealed by God, though it is above the reach of our understanding; yet we have the strongest and most cogent

reason

reason in the world to believe it : because God is infinitely wise and all-knowing, and therefore cannot be deceived ; and being infinitely good, we may be sure he will not deceive us. Thus we are conducted to the knowledge of that faith and that peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord : for this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

VI. We profess in the *second* ARTICLE of *Of faith in our christian faith*, that we *believe in Jesus Christ Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son our Lord* : because, as we believe in God, so we must also believe in Christ ; for this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, who shall save his people from their sins. Therefore to believe in *Jesus Christ* our Lord, imports not only to be fully persuaded, that he is that eternal Son of God, which he declared himself to be, and that he is the true Messiah and Saviour of the world ; but it farther includes our obligation and consent to obey all his commandments, who is our Lord and our King ; and to put our whole trust in him alone, for our obtaining eternal life, and all other intermediate blessings, only by his mediation for us with his Father. Therefore, says the apostle, there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. So that we are absolutely obliged to believe this part of the christian faith ; because we cannot be saved by Christ, but by believing in him.

When we give the title of *the Christ* or *Messiah* unto Jesus our Saviour, then we profess to believe that Jesus is the person consecrated of God, by the most sacred anointing, to that high office of saving mankind ; like which were the offices of king, priest, and prophet, under the law, in the setting of whom apart to their proper offices, the anointing oil was used, as types and shadows of the Saviour of all mankind. Wherefore the prophet Isaiah, foreseeing this coming of the Son of God for our redemption, cries out in the person of the prophet Jesus, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. And, that Jesus was anointed to the *sacerdotal* office, appears from that of the Psalmist, The Lord swears, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedec*. It appears Jesus was to be anointed to the *regal* office, from the most ancient tradition of the Jews, and predictions of the prophets ; and to this he was solemnly set apart when God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality, might, dominion, and power. And he

Who is the Christ.

A prophet.

A priest.

A king.

exerciseth

In what manner.

exerciseth this office by delivering his people a law; and by his grace enabling them to walk in it; by preserving them from temptations; by supporting and delivering them under afflictions; and will at last compleat all, by rewarding them in a most royal manner, making them kings and priests unto God and his Father. Wherefore,

The influence of this belief.

If we believe him to be our prophet, we should be induced thereby to hear, and receive, and observe his word, as being delivered by one whom God himself hath declared to be his beloved Son, and hath commanded us to hear: and our belief in him as our priest, should add confidence to that obedience, and give us boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; and having a high-priest over the house of God, to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; to consider ourselves as bought with a price, and no longer our own, but bound to live only to him who died for us. Our belief in him, considered as our king, should induce us to be his faithful subjects, and to honour him by a chearful and ready obedience to his laws. And we may always remember, that this is part of the seal of the foundation of God, that every one that nameth the name of Christ, shall depart from iniquity.

Why called our Lord.

When we acknowledge Christ to be our Lord, it is not only in respect of his general dominion over all things, but more peculiarly as having by his death conquered him, to whom we had before yielded ourselves servants to obey: and also having by that death purchased us by his blood. Consequently, seeing that Christ is our absolute Lord and Master; since he hath bought us, and hath the sole right to the property and possession of us, we must remember that we are not our own; that we ought not to do our own will, but his, and neither live nor die to ourselves, but only to him.

Objection.

Some that pretend to be guided by right and sound reason, seem to stumble at the dignity of the person, whom we believe to have given himself a sacrifice and propitiation for the sins of mankind; they ask, How is it possible, that the only begotten Son of God should be made flesh, and become man? How is it conceivable that God should condescend so far as to send, and the Son of God condescend willingly to be sent, and do such great things for his creatures? and above all, How is it consistent with reason, to suppose God condescending to do so much for such frail and weak creatures as men, who, in all appearance, seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable part of this world?

Answer.

Here it must readily be acknowledged, that human reason could never have discovered such a method

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a method as this, for the making peace between finners and an offended God, without exprefs revelation. But then neither, on the other side, when once this method is made known, is there any such difficulty or inconceivableness in it, as can reasonably make a wise and considerate man call in question the truth of a well attested revelation, merely upon that account: which indeed any plain absurdity or contradiction, in the matter of a doctrine pretended to be revealed, would, it must be confessed, unavoidably effect. For, as to the possibility of the incarnation of the Son of God, whatever mysteriouness there confessedly was in the manner of it, yet, as to the thing itself, there is evidently no more unreasonableness in believing the possibility of it, than in believing the union of our soul and body, or any other certain truth; which we plainly see implies no contradiction in the thing itself, at the same time that we are sensible we cannot discover the manner how it is done. And, it is not at all unreasonable to believe, that God should make so great a condescension to his creatures; and that a person of such dignity, as the only begotten Son of God, should vouchsafe to give himself a sacrifice for the sins of men. He who duly considers that it is no diminution to the glory and greatness of the Father of all things, to inspect, govern, and direct every thing by his all-wise providence through the whole creation; to take care even of the meanest of his creatures, so that not a sparrow falls to the ground, nor a hair of our head perishes, without his knowledge; and to observe exactly every particle, even of inanimate matter, in the universe: he (I say) who duly considers this, cannot with reason think it any real disparagement to the Son of God (tho' it was indeed a most wonderful and amazing instance of humility and condescension) that he should concern himself so far for sinful men, as to appear in their nature to reveal the will of God more clearly to them, to give himself a sacrifice and expiation for their sins, and to bring them to repentance and eternal happiness.

By these and such like considerations we arrive *The truth and* at the truth and excellency of the christian religion, or that way and manner of worshipping *excellency of christianity* and serving God, which was revealed to the *proved.* world by Jesus Christ; wherein are contained, articles of faith to be believed, precepts of life to be practised, and motives and arguments to enforce obedience. For, the truth of this religion appears from that full and clear evidence, which our Saviour and his apostles gave of their divine mission and authority, and from the nature of that religion they taught, which was worthy of God, and tended to the happiness and welfare of mankind. It is not only universally acknowledged by christians, but hath been owned by *Jews and Heathens*, who *From history.* have writ of those times, that there was such a

person

person as Jesus Christ, who lived in the reign of Tiberius Cesar. And that the same Jesus was crucified, is averred not only by the christians, who, notwithstanding the ignominy they might thereby seem to bring upon themselves, worshipped him as God, but also by the Jews. Also it is very probable there were publick records of the whole matter at Rome, as the account was sent by the Roman governor from Jerusalem to Cesar; for the ancient christians in their writings, in the defence of their religion, appeal thereto; which they had too much understanding and modesty to have done, if no such account had ever been sent, or had not been then extant to be produced: so that no history can be better established by the unanimous testimony of people, otherwise very different from one another, than the life and death of Christ Jesus. - Besides, *August. 72*

From prophecy. All the former prophecies, which related to the Messias, were fulfilled in him alone: He received the testimony of a voice from heaven several times: and he was endowed with the power of working miracles, particularly with the gift of prophecy proved and made good by the fulfilling of his own predictions, than which nothing can be a greater evidence of a divine mission; because it is the greatest argument of infinite power and wisdom. And,

From miracles. The miracles which he wrought, prove him to be sent from God. For the power of working true miracles, when they are great and unquestionable, and frequently wrought in publick, is one of the highest evidences we can have of the divine mission of any person. Upon this ground, Nicodemus concludes that our Saviour was sent from God: and our Saviour himself insists upon this as the great proof of his divine authority; and the resisting the evidence of his miracles, he reckons as an aggravation of unbelief. If I had not, saith he, done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin; and further he tells us, such an obstinate resistance of the evidence of his miracles is the sin against the Holy Ghost. And the greatest enemies to him and our holy religion confess, that our Saviour did many wonderful things, tho' they attributed them to the power of magick; he healed all sorts of diseases in multitudes of people, by a touch or a word, and that sometimes upon those at a distance; the most desperate diseases submitted to his power; he restored sight to the man born blind; he made the woman straight that had been crooked and bowed together eighteen years; and the man that had an infirmity thirty-eight years, he bids take up his bed and walk; he multiplied a few loaves and fishes for the feeding of some thousands; and he raised several from the dead, particularly Lazarus, after he had been four days in the grave: all these miracles he wrought publickly in the midst of his enemies; and indeed they were so publick and so undeniable, that the apostle appeals

to the Jews themselves, declaring, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God among them by miracles, and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also knew: but the great miracle, that gave the utmost evidence of our Saviour's divine authority, was his raising himself from the dead, on the third day; a matter of fact, which all christians have not only believed, but esteem the great foundation on which they build the proof of their whole belief.*

Besides, the spirit of prophecy resided in him, and his divine authority was made manifest by the accomplishments of his own predictions; for whenever the predictions have been plain and clear, and the event answerable, it hath always been counted a sure proof of a divine mission; upon which account the angel tells St. John, that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Thus our Saviour foretold his own death, with the manner of it, and the circumstances of his sufferings; the treachery of Judas, the cowardice of his disciples, and St. Peter's denying him; his own resurrection, and the descent of the Holy Ghost in miraculous gifts. He prophesied of the destruction of Jerusalem, which came to pass in forty years after his own death, within the compass of that generation, as he had foretold; the very foundations of the temple and city were destroyed, and the ground plowed up, so that there was not left one stone upon another that was not thrown down according to our Saviour's prediction: and indeed the signs that he foretold should fore-run the destruction of that city, with the circumstances that came with it and followed after, exactly agree with that punctual and credible history of the fact related by Josephus. And he assured his disciples, that his gospel should be published in all nations, and that his religion should prevail against all the opposition of worldly power and malice, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; which things being purely contingent in respect of us, and many of them unlikely to happen, the fulfilling of such predictions argue a prophetick spirit in our Saviour, and consequently, that he was sent from God. Therefore,

Unless we believe in this article, where is our faith and hope in the redemption that was brought by the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, which should never have been performed by any person, but by him, who is God as well as man? He must have been a sacrifice of infinite dignity, and nothing less could bear any proportion to the infinite guilt of our sins, as being committed against a God of infinite goodness and majesty. And by this belief we are encouraged and freed from all doubt and scruple in giving to Christ that divine honour which is due to him; which if we ascribe to

From his own prophecies of himself.

We must believe in this article.

* See this article treated of in page 81, &c.

him,

him, without being satisfied that it is his due, we cannot wholly free ourselves from that idolatry, which is a breach of the first commandment. By this faith also of the inward dignity of Christ, we may learn to raise our affections to the utmost pitch our nature is capable of, in the admiration of that wonderful goodness of the Father, in sending his beloved Son to die for us, while we were his enemies, rebels, apostate creatures; and that wonderful love and condescension of the Son, in so far debasing himself for our sakes, who deserved the most grievous vials of his wrath and indignation to revenge the breach of his covenant.

The angel's message.

VII. In those words by which the angel told the Virgin Mary, that she should be the mother of Jesus Christ; that her son should be great, and called the son of the Highest; that the Lord God should give unto him the throne of his father David; that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and that of his kingdom there should be no end, is contained an astonishing message, looking back to the prophecy concerning the Messiah, which foretold, that the government should be upon his shoulder, and his name should be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose government and peace there should be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. For, the angel's description of the Messiah imports, that God would settle upon the Messiah a spiritual kingdom (of which that temporal one of David was but an imperfect representation) the absolute government of his church, that spiritual house of Jacob; and that this kingdom of his should never be destroyed, as the kingdom of the Jews was to be, and which is now fulfilled.

This declaration was preceded by the salutation made to the blessed virgin by the same angel, in these words, *His salutation.* Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women. The meaning of which was, that the blessed virgin was most excellently disposed to receive the greatest honour that ever was done to the daughters of men; her employment being holy and pious, her body chaste, and her soul adorned with all virtues, particularly with humility, which is in the sight of God of great price; for though she was to be the mother of an universal and everlasting blessing, which all former ages had desired, and all future times should rejoice in; yet she resigns all this glory to him that gave it her, and declares whence she received it, that no other name, but his, might have the honour. When she received this salutation, she was troubled at the saying of the angel, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation it should be; judging herself unwor-

thy of so great an honour, and being surpris'd with the strangeness of such an appearance in her retirement. But when the angel positively affirmed, that she should conceive and bring forth the Messias, she inquires how that could be, since she knew not a man? yet this implied in her no doubt concerning the thing, nor any diffidence in respect to the issue of it; but rather admiration in respect to the wonderful manner of effecting it; at most it implies, that she desired to be satisfied in the manner as well as in the matter of this mystery: and therefore the angel answers the difficulty by declaring the wonderful manner how his message should be brought about, *viz.* That the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and that the power of the Highest should overshadow her; and then furnished her with an example of somewhat of like nature in her cousin, and referred her to the power of God, to which nothing is impossible to be done. Upon this she demonstrated an entire faith and obedience in her reply; Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. Then the blessed virgin expresses her gratitude in that admirable hymn call'd the *Magnificat*; wherein she shews such a thankful sense of the great honour that was conferred upon her, and testifies her humility and devotion, as well as the infinite power and goodness of God, that it appears, as she was highly favoured, so she was also full of grace, and had a mind plentifully enriched with the gifts of God's holy Spirit. Thus

The only begotten Son of God *was conceived* God made
by the HOLY GHOST, and took man's nature man.
in the womb of the blessed virgin, of her sub-

stance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man: who was seen and handled; who was arraigned, condemned, and crucified, and afterwards laid in the grave; not indeed in his divine, but in his human nature.

When we profess that we believe our Saviour *The birth of*
Jesus Christ *was born of the Virgin Mary*, we *Christ.*
are also to believe, that the Virgin Mary espoused unto Joseph, who, before and after her espousals, was a pure and unspotted virgin, and having, by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, conceived within her womb the only begotten Son of God, did bring him forth after the natural time of other women. So that the Saviour of the world was born of a woman, made under the law, without the least pretence of any original corruption; that he might deliver us from the guilt of sin. And he was born of a virgin of the house and lineage *Of the house*
of David, that he might sit upon his throne, and *of David.*
reign for evermore. And that the promised Mes-
sias was to be born after this miraculous manner, the prophecies

of the Old Testament foretold : one says, the Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth, a woman shall compass a man. Another says, behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. In consequence whereof,

Of a virgin. his mother that bore him was a *pure virgin*, as appeared both from her own account, and that of Joseph her reputed husband ; for when Joseph doubted of her chastity, an angel was dispatched to clear her honour, and

Conceived by the Holy Ghost. to assure him, that what was *conceived* in her, was not by man, but *of the Holy Ghost*. And when she objected the impossibility of her being a mother, the angel explains it to her by the Holy Ghost coming upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowing her. This was so unquestionable to the apostles and primitive christians, that they universally and firmly believed it, and thought it a point of so great moment, as to deserve a place in that summary of the christian faith, called the apostles creed.

At Bethlehem. The place of our Saviour's birth was *Bethlehem*, whither Joseph and Mary went in obedience to the decree of Augustus, to be taxed ; the providence of God making use of this conjuncture, by verifying a prophecy, to signify and publish the birth of the true Messias. The concourse of people to Bethlehem was so great, that they could find no accom-

In a stable. modation but *a stable*, wherein the blessed virgin brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swadling clothes, and laid him in a manger ; doing herself the offices of a pious and tender parent ; whilst all the angels of God worshipped him, and published to the world the glad

Published by angels. tidings of his birth. For, as certain *shepherds* were keeping watch over their flocks by night, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory

of the Lord shone round about them : so that the splendour of the appearance confounded their senses, and made them sore afraid. But the angel quickly removed the terror that seized them, with the tidings he brought of great joy to all people, in those comfortable words, Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Yet lest they should expect a prince accompanied with pomp and magnificence, the angel described the meanness and obscurity of his circumstances, as a token to guide them in the search of this new-born prince. This shall be a sign unto you, you shall find the babe wrapt in

Worshipped by shepherds. swadling cloaths, and lying in a manger. And having this notice, the shepherds immediately went to Bethlehem ; and having found the account true, which the angels had told them, they returned, glorifying and praising God.

The Jews were in a general expectation of the appearing of the Messiah at the *time of his birth*, *At the expected time.* as appears from the ancient and general tradition, that at the end of the second thousand years the Messiah should appear; and likewise from that particular computation of the Jewish doctors, not long before our Saviour's coming, who, upon a solemn debate of that matter, did determine the Messiah would come within fifty years; which is confirmed from the great jealousy which Herod had concerning a king of the Jews, that was expected about that time to be born; and from the testimony of Josephus, who tells us, the Jews rebelled against the Romans, being encouraged thereto by a celebrated prophecy in their scriptures, that about that time a famous prince should be born among them, that should have dominion over all the earth. And that the heathen world was in expectation of such an appearance, is evident from the famous testimonies of two eminent Roman historians. Suetonius says, there was an ancient and general opinion famous throughout all the eastern parts, that the fates had determined, that there should come out of Judea those that should govern the world. Which words seem to be a verbal translation of that prophecy, Out of Judah should come the ruler. Tacitus writes, that a great many were possessed with a persuasion, and it was contained in the ancient books of the priests, that at that very time the East should prevail, and that they who should govern the world were to come out of Judea. Which phrase, that the East should prevail, refers to that title given the Messiah by the prophet, who says, He is called the man whose name is the East.*

When our Saviour appeared in the world, he *its advantages* scattered and dispelled that cloud of idolatry, *to man.* and that corruption of manners which had fully overspread it: he became a light to lighten the Gentiles, as he was the glory of his people Israel. Whence, under the conduct of such a guide, we cannot fail of acquiring the knowledge of God's will in this world, and the comfortable expectation of life everlasting in the world to come; whether we consider the dignity and excellency of his person, the clearness and perfection of his precepts, or the brightness of his own example, together with the encouragements of the gracious assistances and glorious rewards, which he hath promised to all those, that engage and persevere in his service: for he who lay in the bosom of the Father, and had the Spirit communicated to him without measure, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, could not want a perfect knowledge of what was most agreeable to the divine will; and consequently we must have abundant

* For though we translate it Branch, yet the Hebrew word signifies both, and may be rendered the one as well as the other.

reason to put our trust and confidence in that method of attaining salvation he hath discovered ; and we cannot fail of success, if we are not wanting to ourselves in our neglect thereof. It directs us to the true object of worship, and gives us rational and worthy notions of that Being we are obliged to adore ; and is most fitly adapted to raise our natures to the greatest improvement they are capable of in this world. *e2c ept*

Sept SUNDAY IV.

I. *Of the sufferings, crucifixion ; and* II. *Of the death,* III. *Burial ;* IV. *Resurrection, and* V. *Ascension of* JESUS CHRIST. VI. *Of his mediatorial office and sitting at the right-hand of God ; and* VII. *Of his coming to judge the world at the last day.*

Christ suffers. I. **I**N the fourth ARTICLE of our christian faith we thankfully profess our belief, That this same Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, very God of very God, the Prince of glory, the heir of everlasting bliss, the promised Messias, who taking the nature of man, yet being in that nature still the same person he was before, *suffered under PONTIUS PILATE, was crucified, died and was buried ;* Or, that he was subject to all those frailties and infirmities, those outward injuries and violent impressions, to which mortality is liable. His whole life was full of sufferings, from his birth in the stable to his death upon the cross ; but particularly in his last bitter passion, he suffered most exquisite pains and torments in his body, and inexpressible fears and sorrows, and unknown anguish in his soul ; he sweat drops of blood. One of his disciples betrayed him, and he was denied by another. He was apprehended, and bound by the rude soldiers as a malefactor ; accused by false witnesses ; arraigned and condemned by that judge who declared he could find no fault in him. He was buffeted, and scourged, and spit upon ; derided and mocked by the people, the soldiers, and at last by the high-priest himself : he was made the scorn, and contempt, and sport of his insolent and insulting enemies ; and was hurried to death by the clamour of the rabble, that cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. Accordingly he was nailed to the cross ; on which, *Was crucified.* after having hung several hours, he gave up the ghost. This way of putting to death was called crucifixion, a Roman punishment, remarkable for the exquisite pains and ignominy of it. The torment of it appeared from the piercing those parts of the body with nails which are most nervous, and yet did not quickly procure death ; and the shame of it was evident from those upon whom it was inflicted, being only slaves, and such as had run away from their masters. *Sept. And*

And that our Saviour also suffered in his mind, appears from those grievous agonies he felt; first, *Tormented in mind.* in the garden just before his apprehension, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; when he sweat as it were drops of blood, and prayed thrice with great vehemence to his Father, that if it were possible, that bitter cup might pass from him; and from that inconceivable anguish, which he expressed upon the cross, when he broke out into that passionate exclamation, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Thus evil to come tormented his soul with fear, and evil present, with sadness, anguish, and sorrow. Not that he suffered the torments of the damned, for as he knew no guile, consequently he deserved and could suffer no punishment. But when we reflect how perfectly the blessed Jesus understood the evil and guilt of sin; how zealous he was of God's glory; how desirous of the salvation of mankind; and yet withal that he knew how small a number would be saved; how an ungrateful and rebellious world would frustrate the end of his death, and the designs of his mercy; we may in some measure guess at that anguish that sunk and depressed him in such a wonderful manner, as made him say, My soul is sorrowful unto death. For, we may imagine how much he, who loved us so well as to die to redeem us, might be grieved and afflicted, when he foresaw, that even by his dying he should not save us all from the damnation of hell.

But here let it be remarked, that our blessed Saviour suffered only in his *human nature, or Only as man.* that nature of man which he took upon him; yet since it was united to the divine nature, and that there was a most intimate conjunction of both natures in the person of the Son, there did from thence result a true proper communication of names, characters, and properties; so that the very eternal Son of God may rightly be said to have suffered whatsoever the man Christ Jesus endured in the flesh of sinners; because the properties of each nature separate may reasonably be affirmed of that person in whom the two natures are united by the power of God. And our Saviour suffered the painful and shameful death of the cross, to deliver us from the wrath to come, and to purchase eternal redemption for us: And to give us a perfect pattern of patience and resignation to the will of God, and of all those christian virtues which are necessary to qualify us to receive the benefit of his satisfaction; leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. For,

When by our sins we had justly incurred the *Its benefit to* displeasure of almighty God, and were liable to *man.* eternal misery, our blessed Saviour discharged the obligation; and by shedding his most precious blood, as the price of our redemption, made satisfaction to God for us: he was contented to be offered a sacrifice for us, to bear our sins in

his own body on the tree, and to atone for the guilt of our offences by the one oblation of himself once offered for us all. And he died not only for our benefit and advantage, but in our place and stead; so that if he had not died, we had eternally perished, without being able to escape the justice of an angry God. Wherefore the blood of Christ, which was shed for us upon the cross, is called the blood of the covenant; because thereupon God was pleased to enter into a covenant of grace and mercy with mankind, wherein he hath promised and engaged, for the sake of Christ's sufferings, voluntarily undergone upon our account, and in our stead, to forgive the sins of all those that truly repent and believe, and to make them partakers of eternal life in the world to come.

The use and necessity of this faith.

The reason and necessity for our belief that Christ suffered, appears from the assurance we thence receive that he was truly man; which if he were not, man could not be redeemed by him. We are also hereby assured, that satisfaction is made to the justice of God for our sins, whereof in his decree no remission could be but by shedding of blood. We likewise learn from this faith, that he is truly affected with the utmost compassion of our afflictions, and is a most faithful and merciful high priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and therefore ready to succour them that are tempted. And finally such a belief as this prepares us to receive with patience the sufferings of this life: for if God spared not his own son, how shall he spare his adopted ones, whose best evidence of their being his children, is their being under his fatherly correction; otherwise, as the apostle observes, we should be bastards, and not sons: but if, when we suffer with him, we also suffer like him, and follow the admirable pattern he has left us of humility and patience, and absolute submission to the will of God, we then shall be made partakers of his divine holiness. As, by his crucifixion, our Saviour cancelled the obligation we were under to perform the whole law, and blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary unto us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; so we ought to learn, that if we will be Christ's, we must crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, and glory in nothing save in the cross of Jesus Christ crucified.

Christ's death.

II. And although Jesus was both God and man, yet he did truly and properly die by an actual departure of his soul from his body, in whose union his life, as man consisted; as appears not only from the many plain texts of scripture, which say that he died, but farther from those texts, *For into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having thus said, he gave up the ghost by the means of a violent death, caused by the pains and tortures inflicted on him, which could not*

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without a miracle, but dissolve that natural disposition of the body, which is necessary to continue its union with the soul. He voluntarily indeed submitted himself to that violence, which could not have been forced upon him without such a submission; and therefore he saith, no man taketh away my life from me, but I lay it down of myself, &c. And after he had so submitted himself, he could not by the course of nature avoid that death. After this view of the humiliation of our blessed Saviour, it cannot be improper for us to consider what effect his life, doctrine, and sufferings should have upon us, and to remark by what steps

he draws us to God: in which inquiry we shall soon be convinced that his method to prevent our falling into sinful actions, was to lay a restraint upon our thoughts which lead to them, and to oblige us to govern our looks, which give birth to our thoughts. To obviate all those evils which proceed from an inordinate desire of riches, he hath discovered to us that admirable temper of mind distinguished in his gospel by poverty of spirit, which maketh us even fit loose to the good things we possess. To keep us at a distance from the temptations of lying and detraction, he hath forbid all idle words, that the care to avoid them might secure us from falling into those greater crimes. To hinder the fatal effects of anger and revenge, he hath nipped these passions in the bud, by commanding us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that hurt us. To facilitate the virtue of patience, so necessary in this vale of tears, he hath manifested to us the treasures that are hid in adversity, and the advantage of being persecuted for his sake; that what the world calls misfortune and calamity, often proves the blessed occasion of making us happy both in this and the next life: Blessed are they that mourn; blessed are they that are persecuted. And to make us quiet and easy in ourselves, and gentle to others, he requireth us to have a quick sense of our own weaknesses and defects, and readily to condescend to the lowest offices for the good of our distressed brethren.

*How Christ
draws us to
God.*

By precept.

By example.

All which commands he enforces by his own example; for, in his own person he hath recommended to us the most hard and difficult, as well as those that are most useful and serviceable. To teach us piety and devotion, he frequently retired, and spent whole nights in prayer; and from worldly occurrences raised matter for spiritual thoughts; and conformed not only to divine institutions, but to human appointments that tended to promote virtue. That we might learn humility, this prince of glory condescended to the poverty of a stable; this wisdom of the Father became dumb, and was reduced to the simplicity of an infant; he spent thirty years of his life in retirement, subject to his parents, and unknown to the world: that he might be ready to exercise universal charity to the bodies and souls

souls of men, the whole course of his life was employed in good works: that he might suppress all ambitious desires, he refused the offer of the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and when the people would have made him a king, he withdrew, and they knew not where to find him out: that we might be obedient to government, he paid tribute, though he was free from any such obligation, and was forced to work a miracle to perform it: that we might live above the world, he chose to have no part or share in the possession of it, the Son of man not having where to lay his head: he was perfectly contented in his mean circumstances, that in all our sufferings we might be resigned to the will of God: in his bitter agony he renounced the strongest inclination of nature, and submitted to the appointment of the Almighty: that a regard to the judgment of the world might not prevail upon us to transgress the laws of our God, he made himself of no reputation; and in order to do good to mankind, was contented to be esteemed one of the worst of men, a magician, an impostor, a friend and companion of publicans and sinners, and a seducer of the people. And for us to resist all temptations to anger, and preserve an evenness of mind under all provocations, he bore with the dulness and slowness of his disciples, both in their understanding and believing what he plainly taught, and answered the sharpest reproaches of his enemies with calm arguments and modest silence, never bringing a railing accusation instead of a sound reason. That we might practice that difficult duty of loving our enemies, he prayed most earnestly for his, even when he felt the most cruel effects of their malice, and imputed it to their ignorance, Father, says he, forgive them, for they know not what they do; and that he might excite us to the performance of our duty, has offered pardon and forgiveness of what is past, and perfect reconciliation to God, by the merits of his death and passion, provided we return to him by sincere repentance, faith, and obedience to his law. 25 *John* 25

By grace.

He strengthens us at present, and enables us to do our duty, by enlightening our dark minds, by exciting our wills to that which is good, and by raising our courage under difficulties, dangers, and temptations: he raises our fears by the threatnings of eternal punishment in the next life, and encourages our hopes by the promises of everlasting rewards to the whole man, body and soul; which are the most powerful considerations to take men off from sin, and bring them to goodness, whereby they may obtain eternal life.

What we ought to learn from hence.

Wherefore, it should be our greatest care to please him, by a constant regard to his commandments, and an endeavour to prevail on others to do the same; by making a daily progress in virtue and piety, that we may be conformed to the likeness of that beloved object; by setting a great value upon all means and oppor-

tunities

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tunities of conversing with him ; in prayer and meditation, in hearing his word, and receiving the blessed tokens of his love, which he hath left us in the blessed sacrament : by being more provoked to hear his holy name blasphemed, than for any reproach that can be cast upon ourselves ; and by longing for his glorious appearing, that we may enjoy him without interruption to all eternity, in the glory of God the Father.

III. Christ being taken down from the cross was buried, as had been typified by Jonas lying *His burial.* three days and three nights in the whale's belly ; and intimated in that of the Psalmist, My flesh shall rest in hope, &c. which plainly teacheth, that the body was to be buried, but not lie in the grave to see corruption. But Isaiah is more express, saying, he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. Whence this part of our christian faith should work within us something correspondent *Its influence.*

to it ; for we are buried with him in baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life, being raised from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness. And here

Let it be remarked, that the pious solemnities used in the burial of our Saviour; the honourable mention of the persons concerned in it, and of the woman who brake the box of precious ointment to prepare his body for it, have been in all ages thought sufficient grounds for the decent burials used in the christian church : and this custom of the church is said to have had a great influence in the conversion of the Heathens ; and after christianity had got possession of the Roman empire, it soon put an end to the old custom of burning the bodies of the dead. Nature itself directs, that some respect seems due to the dead bodies of men, for the sake of the souls which once inhabited them, but much more to those, which have been the living temples of the Holy Ghost, and being bought by Christ, shall be one day made like unto his glorious body, according to that mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself. *Recommends decent burials.*

IV. In the *fifth* ARTICLE of our christian *Christ rose* faith we profess to believe, that JESUS CHRIST *from the dead.* *in the third day rose again from the dead :* for the beloved and only begotten Son of God, who was crucified and died for our sins, did not long continue in the state of death ; but on the third day *, by his infinite power, did revive and raise

* He was buried three days, according to the common computation of days, both ancient and modern, and particularly in scripture computation. So Lazarus is said to be four days dead, tho' the fourth day whereon he was raised, was one of them. Eight days

raise himself, reuniting the same soul to the same body which was buried, and so rose the same man, according to the testimony of sufficient and credible witnesses, thoroughly informed concerning the fact. These witnesses were the pious women, who thinking with sweet spices to have anointed him dead, found him risen. The apostles, who conversed with him frequently after his resurrection, were satisfied he had a real body, by his eating and drinking with them. And one of them searched the holes that the nails had made in his hands, and thrust his hands into his side. All the other disciples testify the same, to whom he also appeared, even to five hundred brethren, at one time. Then he was seen of James; appeared unto St. Stephen at his martyrdom, and to St. Paul at his conversion, in his way to Damascus. And the veracity of these witnesses cannot be doubted of: because the doctrine they taught forbade all falsehood upon pain of damnation: Again, the sealing the truth of this fact with their blood, is a sufficient evidence of their veracity. And have we not the testimony of his very enemies to bear witness of this great truth? those soldiers that watched at the sepulchre, and pretended to keep his body from the hands of the apostles, felt the earth trembling under them, and saw the countenance of an angel like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; they who upon this sight did shake, and became as dead men, while he whom they kept, became alive; even some of these came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done, when Christ rose from the dead. And the angels, that heavenly host, which brought the glad tidings of his birth to the shepherds, bore evidence of the truth hereof. One came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. Two, in white, sitting the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain, said unto the women, Why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here, but is risen. Luke xxiv. v.

*Testified by
angels.*

The reason why he only appeared to his followers and not to the Jewish nation, is because it was only of necessity, that those who were to be the first publishers of the gospel, should have the utmost evidence and satisfaction concerning the truth and reality of Christ's resurrection; for by the same reason that he was obliged to have appeared to the Jewish nation, it might be pleaded, that the whole Roman empire ought to have had the like manifestation, and that he should have shewn himself to the unbelieving in all succeeding ages.

*Why he appeared only to
his disciples.*

days are said to be accomplished for Christ's circumcision, but the day of his birth and circumcision too went both into that account.

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It was necessary Christ should rise from the dead to shew the debt, he died for, was discharged; and that his satisfaction was accepted in heaven. If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins. Besides he rose to prove himself to be the Messiah, and to evidence the truth and divinity of his doctrine, which he had enjoined to be observed by all men. He had appealed to it as a sign of his being a true prophet, and therefore, by way of trial, which God prescribed the Jews, viz. the accomplishment of predictions, he had appeared to be a false prophet, had he failed therein; for if Christ be not risen, your faith is vain. God having raised our Saviour from the dead after he was condemned and put to death, for calling himself the Son of God, is a demonstration, that he really was the Son of God; and if he was the Son of God, the doctrine he taught was truth from God, and is our guide to heaven.

To prove his divinity.

Again, the resurrection of Christ is an argument of our resurrection; because by his rising from the dead, he became the first fruits of them that slept; by this is secured our resurrection to eternal life, that he who hath promised to raise us up, did raise himself from the dead.

To prove the resurrection of our bodies.

V. In the *sixth* ARTICLE of our christian faith we profess to believe that JESUS ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God

The ascension of Christ.

the Father Almighty; for the same Jesus who by his own power rose again for our justification, having for the space of forty days confirmed the truth of his resurrection, by appearing several times to his disciples, discoursing with them, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God, finished his course upon earth with blessing his disciples: for while he was blessing them, and they beheld and looked stedfastly towards heaven, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight: and behold, Jesus being ascended up into the highest heavens, two angels appeared unto the disciples with the comfortable promise, that as Jesus was taken from them into heaven, so he should in a glorious manner return again to judge the world. And all this was done for the confirmation of the certainty and reality of this great mystery of our faith. Here was need of eye-witnesses, which was not necessary in the act of the resurrection; because, whatever was a proof of his life after death, was a demonstration of his resurrection; but the apostles not being able to see him, when in heaven, it was necessary they should be eye-witnesses of

Why in the sight of his disciples.

his act of ascending, that so they might be able to bear their testimony thereto. Besides, before the apostles saw our Saviour ascend, he had told them whither he was going, and what power and dignity would be conferred upon him; and as an evidence of his exaltation to the right hand of God, had promised to

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to send down the Holy Ghost upon them in a sensible manner; so that they afterwards receiving the wonderful effects of his being there, had abundant evidence of his exaltation, namely, his ascension to the heaven of heavens, the presence of God, where his human nature is seated far above all angels and arch-angels, all principalities and powers; even at the right hand of God the father. Therefore,

And not of the Jews.

Since this our Lord's ascension is of that great advantage to mankind, it may and has been asked why he did not ascend in the sight of the Jews, that they, who had been deceived before, at the time of his crucifixion, might have received a conviction of their error. To which it is answered, that it was only absolutely necessary that they, who were to preach the gospel, should have the utmost evidence of those matters of fact they testified. God's design was to bring the world to salvation by the exercise of faith, which is an act of assent upon the testimony of another, which is inconsistent with sight. Moreover, it is to be doubted, whether they, who ascribed our Saviour's miracles to the power of the devil, and suborned the soldiers to say upon his resurrection, that his disciples stole him away, would not have called his ascension, if they had seen it, a phantasm and vain apparition of the spirit of some corrupt man. Or, let the reason be what it will, God appointed it so to be: it is not the business of the creature, to ask the Creator his reasons for such and such acts of his omnipotency. But,

His office in heaven.

VI. He being now seated at the right hand of God, is become a perpetual patron and advocate in our behalf, to plead our cause, to solicit our concernments, to represent our wants, and to offer up our prayers and requests to God, by virtue of his meritorious sacrifice, which he offered up on the cross for the sins of the whole world. And, this his sitting at the right-hand of God, is expressly foretold in these words, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right-hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool. And we are assured by the holy penmen, that our Jesus is actually there; for one tells us, that he was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right-hand of God; and another records, that God raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand in heavenly places. But such scripture phrases are not to be taken in a strict and proper, but in a figurative sense, as spoken in condescension to our capacities, and after the manner of men, and by way of comparison to what belongs to mankind. And as the sitting at a prince's right-hand is esteemed a place of the highest honour, the first import of this phrase seems to be, that Christ is invested with the highest glory from God, and exalted to the highest dignity; and since by the hand of God his infinite power may be signified, this phrase may further import Christ's having

received

received the highest power and dominion from God: but where Christ is said to be sitting, we are not to understand that he is determined to such a particular posture of body as is commonly meant by sitting; for, he is sometimes represented as standing at God's right-hand, sometimes in general as being there, without expressing the particular manner of it; but by his sitting, we are to understand his secure and quiet continuance in that high glory, majesty, and judicature.

And this confirms our faith; because it gives us a farther proof of our Saviour's divine mission. For, had he not been sent into the world by God, he had not approved of the message Christ delivered to man. His visible ascension into heaven strengthens our hope; for, by seeing our own nature thus advanced, we are assured that dust and ashes may thither ascend also; and the blessed Jesus being our head, as members of his body, we may expect admission into that heavenly court, where he sits in glory, since we have his word, which can never fail, that he is gone to prepare a place for us: and it exalts our affections, by putting us in mind that our treasure is above, and that therefore we ought not to set our affections upon such things as must perish in this world; that heaven is the true and only happiness of a Christian; and that our great design in this world ought to be, to fit and prepare ourselves for the enjoyment of a blessed eternity; that our constant endeavours ought to tend towards the qualifying ourselves to be received into our Saviour's presence, to whom we have the greatest obligations of gratitude and duty; that by trampling upon our sins, and subduing the lusts of the flesh, we may make our conversation correspond to our Saviour's condition, that where the eyes of the apostles were forced to leave him, thither our thoughts may follow him, even into the highest heavens. We should also learn from hence to have an assurance of the pardon of our sins, acceptance of our sincere though imperfect obedience, and of protection and defence in our spiritual warfare, as knowing that at last we shall be more than conquerors; and it should raise in us a noble ambition of being made partakers of that glory, to which Christ our head is already advanced; who has promised, that to him who overcometh, he will grant to sit with him in his throne.

VII. When we profess, in the *seventh ARTICLE* of our belief, that CHRIST *will come again to judge the quick and the dead*, we declare that we steadfastly believe, that our Lord Jesus Christ shall at the end of the world descend from heaven in his human nature. As to the manner and circumstances of Christ's coming: He shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels: he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God: he shall come in his own glory, and in his

his Father's, and in that of his holy angels : he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him; and he shall separate them, the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats : those that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and they that are alive shall be changed, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Which sufficiently shews the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall then come glorious in the brightness and splendor of his celestial body; supported by that authority, which his father hath committed to him, of universal judge; accompanied with thousands of holy angels, who shall attend, not only to make up the pomp of his appearance, but as ministers of his justice; and seated in that bright throne of glory, from whence he shall summon all mankind to appear before his dreadful tribunal, where they shall come upon their trial, and have all their actions strictly examined.

*Proved by
Scripture.*

Concerning which if we search the scripture, there we shall find God hath given assurance unto all men, that he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, in that he hath raised him from the dead. And the method by which God will proceed with his creatures in that day, is fully described by the judge himself in his gospel. The apostle of the Gentiles declares expressly, that we must all appear and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. And the apostle of the circumcision says, that the day of the Lord shall come, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. 12

*Appointed by
the Father.*

The administration of which judgment is committed by the Father to his Son Jesus Christ. God will judge the world in righteousness by that man Christ Jesus, whom he hath ordained. The Son of man shall come in the glory of his father with his holy angels, and then shall he reward every man according to his works. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Christ commanded his disciples to preach unto the people, and testify, that it is Jesus that is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead; and the tribunal is called the judgment-seat of Christ. Hence observe, that tho' the right of judging us belongs to God, whose servants and subjects we are, yet the execution of this power of judging is particularly committed to the Son of man; because all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father; that our blessed Saviour might receive publick honour in that nature wherein he suffered; that he, who for our sakes stood before an earthly tribunal, might therefore be constituted judge of the whole world; that he, who was despised and rejected of men, might appear in the glory of his father, attended with an innumerable train of holy angels; that he who was condemned and crucified to

absolve

absolve us, might receive authority to absolve or condemn the whole race of mankind : and, because being cloathed with a human body, he will make a visible appearance, which will be suitable to the other circumstances of that great day ; all which will be performed in the sight of all the world. And again, mankind being judged by one in their own nature, a man like themselves, touched with a feeling of their infirmities, greatly declares the equity of this judgment ; because he understands all our circumstances, and whatever may influence our case, to lessen or increase our crimes. And

Not only men, but angels also will be judged *To judge angels and men.* at the last day ; the fallen angels are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. For the apostle says, Know ye not that we shall judge angels ; or, sit with Christ, and approve that sentence against them which he shall then pronounce ? And all men that have ever lived in the world, and those that shall be alive at our Saviour's coming, shall be gathered before him, who is ordained by God to be judge of quick and dead ; and they shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, both small and great. Neither riches, power, nor honour, shall deliver any great man from the hand of God ; neither shall the poorest slave be excused for his meanness ; for they are all the work of his hands : neither will he have regard to such qualities and circumstances of persons, which do not appertain to the merits of the cause : passing judgment upon all, according to all things we have done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

He will enter into a severe scrutiny how we *In what manner.* have employed all those talents that he hath entrusted us with. Then shall all the powers and faculties that have been given us, all the favours and benefits we have enjoyed, all the means and opportunities that have been afforded us for the living virtuously and holily, and thereby to bring honour and glory to our Master, be brought into our view, and an account be demanded of them : He will account with us for our senses, how we have employed them, whether to the purposes they were given us for, the furnishing our understandings, and the right governing of our bodies, or whether we have made them only instruments of sin, and inlets to vanity : He will account with us for our reason and conscience, how we have employed them ; whether we have done our best to improve them, and whether they have been faithful guides of our actions, or we have suffered them to be abused with folly and false principles, and to be led captive by our lusts and passions : He will call us to account for our memories, how we have employed them ; whether we have been careful to treasure up in them such things as might be useful to our lives, or have only

made them the repositories of things idle, and impertinent, and unprofitable : He will call us to account how we have spent our time in this world ; whether we have employed it to good purposes, in an honest laborious pursuit of a lawful calling, setting a due portion thereof apart for the more immediate service of God, and spending the remainder innocently and wisely ; or whether we have squandered it away in idleness, in play, in revelling, or in impertinent vicious conversation, in the neglect of our main business : He will call us to account for the good creatures he hath from time to time bestowed upon us for our support and refreshment, how we have employed them ; whether we have used them thankfully and soberly, with temperance and moderation, or whether we have abused them to luxury and excess, to gluttony or drunkenness, making therewith provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof : He will call us to account for our learning and intellectual accomplishments, for the advantages of our education, for our health and strength, for our wealth and riches, for our greatness, power, and reputation, and all those special and eminent talents that he hath entrusted us with above others, how we have employed them ; whether we have made them instruments of doing a great deal of good, and being eminently useful in our generation, or whether they have only ministered to pride, and vanity, and self-pleasing, if not to the worse purposes of vice and wickedness : Lastly, he will call us to account for all the opportunities of grace and means of salvation, which we have enjoyed ; for all the good counsels and wise exhortations that have been given us ; for the revelation of his Son that hath been made known to us ; for the use of his word and sacraments ; for all the motions and suggestions of his Holy Spirit within us, dissuading us from sin, and alluring and soliciting us to a course of virtue and holiness : for all these, I say, he will call us to account how we have employed them ; whether we have improved 'em to the purposes they were given for, as we should have done ; whether we have grown in grace, and brought forth fruit suitable to so many helps and advantages, or have been idle and unprofitable servants. These, and a great many other things, which we now scarce think of, shall we be accountable for to the judge at that day. Then shall the wisdom and the justice of the divine providence appear eminently to all the world, in rewarding every man according to his works. Then what the upright man has done, shall be vindicated and approved ; and what he has suffered, shall be abundantly made good ; every thing shall then be perfectly laid open, and exposed in its true and proper light ; plainness and sincerity shall then appear the most perfect beauty ; and the craftiness of men, who lie in wait to deceive, be stripped of all its colours ; all specious pretences, all the methods of deceit, shall then be disclosed before men and angels ; and no

artifice

artifice, no false colours, to conceal the deformity of iniquity, shall then take place. In a word, the ill designing men of this world shall then with shame be convinced, that that upright simplicity, which they despised and derided, is the truest wisdom; and that those dishonest arts, which they so highly esteemed, were in reality the meekest folly: And,

Notwithstanding we may collect from scrip- *Two judg-*
ture that there is a *particular* judgment passed *ments.*
upon all men; for as much as good men, when they die, pass into a state of happiness, and bad men into a state of misery: yet all the declarations of our Saviour and his apostles concerning judgment, with the parables that relate to it, plainly refer to the last and *general* judgment; for, it is only in that day that the whole man shall be compleatly happy, or compleatly miserable, or in that day it is that the bodies of men shall be raised; and as they have been partakers with the soul, either in obeying or offending God, so shall they then share in the rewards or punishments of it, and in that day only can the degrees and measures of their happiness and misery be adjusted; for, even after death, the effects of men's good or bad actions may add to their punishment, or increase their reward, by the good or bad examples they have given, by the foundations they have established for piety and virtue, or by the customs they have introduced to countenance immorality and vice. In that day the reasonableness of God's providence, in relation to the sufferings of good men in this world, will be justified, and his justice cleared by those severe punishments that shall be eternally inflicted upon the wicked, that have forsaken the God of their salvation. And therefore this in a more especial manner is called *the day of the Lord*. And therefore,

If we consult only the light of nature, it will dis- *A last judg-*
cover to us an essential difference between good *ment reasonable*
and evil; whence, by the common consent of mankind, rewards are affixed to the one, and punishments to the other: and according as men govern their actions in relation to these real differences of good and evil, so are their hopes and their fears in respect of a future state. A virtuous life is attended with present quiet and satisfaction, and with the comfortable hope of a future recompence; whereas the commission of any wicked action, though never so secret, sits uneasy upon the mind, and fills it full of horror: all which would be very unaccountable, without the natural apprehension of future punishments and rewards. This is the reason why many of the Heathens esteemed virtue and honesty dearer than life, with all its advantages, and abhorred villainy and impiety worse than death itself. Moreover, the dispensations of God's providence towards men in this world are not confined; good men often suffer, even for the sake of righteousness; and bad men as frequently prosper and flourish,

rish, and that by the means of their wicked practices. Wherefore, to rescue God's proceedings with man from the imputation of injustice, it seems reasonable that there should be a future judgment, for a suitable distribution of punishments and rewards. From hence we learn that

*Degrees of
punishment and
rewards.*

God will reward and punish us in the next life in proportion to the good or evil we shall do in our mortal state. For in that day, the degrees of good and bad actions will be considered as well as their nature and quality. To whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully. So our Saviour plainly teacheth us, by the parable of the talents, that men are rewarded according to the improvement they make. He that hath gained ten talents, is made ruler over ten cities; and he that hath gained five talents, ruler over five cities. The apostle of the Gentiles expressly affirms, that the glory of the saints shall be different at the resurrection. And we are informed from our Saviour's own mouth, that in the day of judgment the condition of Tyre and Sidon, of Sodom and Gomorrah, shall be more tolerable than that of impenitent sinners, that have heard and rejected the terms of salvation through Jesus Christ. By which we are instructed to believe the justice and equity of God's providence, and the reason of the thing; nothing being a greater promoter of piety than the consideration that the least service shall not lose its reward; and the better any man is, the greater disposition he hath for the enjoyment of God: and the more hardened he is in his wickedness, the more susceptible he is of torment, and treasureth up greater measures of wrath against the day of God's vengeance; of which day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

*What we are
taught hereby.*

Therefore we should govern our lives with that care and consideration, and with that due regard to the measures of our duty, as that we may be able to give up our accounts with joy, and not with grief; we should keep that strict watch over ourselves by frequent examination, as that our behaviour, in this state of probation and trial, may obtain the favour and acceptance of our judge at his dreadful judgment-seat: we should restrain ourselves from committing the least sin, because there is none so inconsiderable as to be overlooked at that day of general account for all the world: nor should we encourage ourselves by the greatest secrecy to the breach of any of God's holy laws; because all our actions shall be then exposed to publick view, and known by the whole world to our eternal infamy; neither should we be dejected by the slanders and calumnies of bad men, because our integrity shall then be cleared by him, who cannot err in the sentence he shall

pass on us. But let us improve all those talents the providence of God hath intrusted us with, because we are but stewards, and must give an account of them all: let us be sincere in all our words and actions; because in that day the secrets of all hearts shall be opened; let us avoid all rash judging of others; because he that judgeth another, shall not escape the judgment of the Almighty: let us abound in such works as we know will particularly distinguish men at that day, as feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, &c. because our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord: and let us be humble, and jealous over our own conduct; because though we know nothing by ourselves, we are not thereby justified; for he that judgeth us is the Lord. And also we should learn immediately to reconcile ourselves to God, by a sincere and hearty repentance, that the terrible day of God's wrath may not find us unprepared to enter into the joy of our Lord.

SUNDAY V.

- I. *Of the Holy Ghost, his office and manner of working in us.*
- II. *Of the holy catholick church, and communion of saints.*
- III. *Of the forgiveness of sins; when, and how to be obtained.*
- IV. *Of the resurrection of the body, with answers to all the objections thereto; and of the folly of atheism.*
- V. *Of the life everlasting, in which God's justice in punishing the wicked eternally is vindicated, and the inexcusableness of sin is demonstrated.*

I. IN the eighth ARTICLE of our christian *Of the Holy*
faith, we profess to believe in the HOLY Ghost.

GHOST: for, Christ before his passion had promised to send to his disciples the Holy Ghost, to guide them into all truth, and to shew them things to come, and to glorify him; and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were accordingly all filled with the Holy Ghost, who is the third Person in the most holy Trinity, distinct from the Father and the Son, and eternally proceeding from both; being called the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, and of one divine substance with them, holy in respect of his own divine nature; for as the Son was so begotten of the Father, as to be one God with him, in like manner the Holy Ghost so proceedeth from the Father and the Son, that he is one * and the same God with the Father and the Son. Whose *His peculiar*
peculiar office, as we may understand by the title *office.*
holy, is to sanctify and renew our corrupt nature, and to restore it to its primitive perfection and dignity, to incline us to receive those truths, which are only spiritually discerned,

* See the first article of the belief as explained in this book, p. 61, &c.

and are foolishness to a carnal or natural man; by opening our hearts, that we attend unto those things which were written by his inspiration, and spoken by holy men as they were moved by him; by working in us that faith, which is the gift of God, and which no one can have, but from the Holy Ghost; and giving us that new birth or regeneration, without which we cannot see the kingdom of God, nor enjoy the possession of God's promises, reserved for believers in the next world. And consequently it is this blessed Spirit, which gives clearness to our faith, zeal to our charity, and strength and power to every thing we think or do. For

And manner of working in us. Those helps and assistances, which are necessary for the performance of those conditions, upon which our salvation depends, are bestowed upon us by this divine Spirit; partly by illuminating our understandings in our sincere and diligent inquiries after divine truth; and partly by exciting our wills to that which is good, and strengthening our vigorous endeavours in the prosecution thereof, and are to be obtained only by the use of those means which God hath established for this end; as humble, hearty, and fervent prayer, a frequent and devout use of the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, reading and hearing God's holy word; with the use of all other likely means to attain those graces, which we seek for at his hands: and all this as obedient members of the communion of saints, to whom alone Christ hath promised these influences of the Holy Ghost, which we must feel or know to work in us. When we constantly take care to demean ourselves as living members of that kingdom, which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, our conversation will be in heaven, our delight in God; all our hopes, wishes, and desires, will be fixed on things above, and we shall live that heavenly life here, the perfection whereof will be our happiness hereafter, in the kingdom of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. For, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are represented to us as severally, and in a distinct manner, concurring to our salvation; for God so loved the world, that he sent his only begotten Son, and thro' him we are admitted by one Spirit to the Father.

Why an article of faith.

And we may judge of the necessity of this belief, in that it is taken from the very form of baptism, ordained by Christ himself. Besides, our belief in the Holy Ghost tends to excite in us a desire of those gifts and graces that flow from him, of that new birth from him, which may wholly renew, and spiritualize our souls; that being always led by him, and receiving supplies from him, and continuing in his holy fellowship, we may through him become such temples of God, as he will chuse to delight and dwell in. Therefore we ought to endeavour to cleanse ourselves from all

filthiness

filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the sight of God, whose will is our sanctification, and who from the beginning hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, whom he sent to teach us his will, and to guide us in the way of all truth. *2*

II. In the *ninth* ARTICLE of our christian *Of the holy catholic faith* we profess to believe in *the holy catholic tholick church.* *church, the communion of saints:* because Christ promised to erect a church, when he said, On this rock will I build my church; and we find it mentioned as actually erected in that passage of the *Acts*, And God added to the church daily such as should be saved; which church then consisted of the twelve apostles, and other believers in Christ, continuing in their fellowship, and hearing together the word preached, and breaking bread from house to house, and joining in publick prayers to the Almighty. Therefore, as many as embrace and obey the gospel, may be said to compose one church in respect of their being members of the *Of whom composed.*

same body, and through one and the same Spirit, united unto one head, which is Christ, and built upon one foundation, the chief corner-stone whereof is Christ Jesus; and professing that holy faith, which is but one, and receiving the same sacraments, which are signs and badges of the people of God, whereby we being many, are united by one baptism, and are one bread and one body; also we are one, as being all called in one hope of our calling; and we ought also to be one, as keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and as united by one discipline and government, and guided by the same pastors into the way of eternal life. So that,

Howsoever the unity of the visible church may, *Cannot fail.* through the weakness or perverseness of man, or the wiles of the devil, be defective in these last respects, yet all true and sincere believers are, and always have, and for ever shall be led by him the only good shepherd, their eternal high priest, king, and prophet, unto those heavenly mansions, where joy, peace, love, harmony, unity, happiness, and glory, shall have no end. Moreover, it is reasonable to believe that this one church hath a present existence, and that it hath continued from the times of the apostles, and will continue to the end of the world, from those promises of our Lord, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and that he will be with his disciples always, even to the end of the world. This whole christian church also may be well termed *holy*, as being *Is holy.* separated from the rest of the world by an holy calling, and having holy offices, instituted by God, administered among them, and being more particularly obliged, by naming themselves by the name of Christ, to depart from iniquity, and to obtain that holiness without which no man can see the Lord; its members being predestinate

predestinate to be conformed to the image of Christ, and efficaciously called by God, elect, sanctified, and justified: and shall be perfectly holy when they die.

Catholick or universal.

The primitive-fathers at first understood by the *catholick church*, no more than the church in general, as composed of all particular churches.

Therefore we call the epistles of Peter *catholick*, because they were directed to the church in general; and thus in succeeding ages they called those places of divine worship, wherein all persons of both sexes within a certain district met without distinction, *catholick churches*, in opposition to such private chapels as were erected by monks or friars. And again, the word *catholick* is sometimes applied to particular national churches, as professing the true faith with the rest of the church of God, in opposition to schismatics and hereticks. Besides, the christian church may be also called *catholick*, as it is to be diffused into, and at last take in all nations, and is not confined to one nation, as the Jewish religion was, nor to one place, as the Jewish sacrifices and other priestly ministrations were.

A state of salvation.

To this church it is that we believe God hath added; and will continue to add, those that shall be saved; and as none were saved from the flood but those only who were in the ark of Noah; so we have no reason to think that any shall be saved from the wrath of the last day, and receive the glory promised to the saints, who are not found within the christian church.* And therefore we ought to take the greatest care that we be not excluded from it, either by justly incurring its censures by scandalous and incorrigible sins, or by falling into apostasy, heresy, or schism; and we ought to remember, that as this church is holy, it will be impossible for us to be living members of it, unless we also are holy; without which, our being outward members of it will be not only vain, but pernicious, and the highest aggravation of our crime; because the *catholick church* is the *communion of saints*.

Of the communion of saints.

The larger sense of the word *saints* implies all those persons that are baptized into and profess the christian faith, and are visible members of Christ's church. And, as the wheat grows in the same field with the tares, so the saint hath an external communion in the same church with the hypocrite; both are baptized with the same water, and eat at the same table the bread and wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received; they hear the same doctrine, and openly profess the same faith; but they do not communicate in the same saving grace, nor in that faith which works by love, nor in renovation of the mind and spirit of sinful man. And whenever we profess this belief of the commu-

* See this explained under baptism in page 55.

nion of saints, it ought to excite us to endeavour after the greatest purity and sanctity of life we can possibly attain; because we must turn from the power of satan unto God, or we can have no inheritance among them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Moreover, this profession ought also to excite in all true believers the highest gratitude to God, who hath admitted them to fellowship with himself, made them partakers of the divine nature, and chosen them for the places of his abode, and mansions of eternal bliss. Besides, this profession ought also to inflame all true believers with the highest affection towards one another: for if it be natural to have a brotherly love for our brothers and sisters according to the flesh, how much more ought we to have the highest affection for those who are joined to us by a much nobler relation, who are born again by the same spiritual birth with us, and live the same spiritual life, and are endued with the gracious influences of the same Holy Spirit? and therefore, if we ought to do good to all men, surely much more to those who are of the same household of faith, saints or members of the same communion, and partakers of the same privileges, advantages and promises with ourselves.

Its influence.

III. In the *tenth* ARTICLE of our christian faith we profess a belief in *the forgiveness of sins*: it will therefore be necessary to inquire into the nature of sin; which consists in a man's suf-

Of the forgiveness of sins.

fering himself to be drawn away by the enticement of some appetite, passion, or interest, to what he is sensible is not, in itself, fit and right; to do what his mind

What sin is.

feels to be contrary to the law of God, made known to him either by reason or revelation; contrary to piety or godliness; contrary to sobriety or temperance; contrary to truth, justice, equity, or charity. Hence sin, in it's own nature, even separate from the consideration of it's being an obstinate disobeying the revealed will of God, is in itself utterly unreasonable and inexcuseable: It is acting in opposition to the known reason and proportion of things; contrary to that eternal order and equity which God has established in the original constitution of nature; opposite to the light of reason, the dictates of conscience, the unprejudiced judgment of our own minds, the agreeing opinion of all wise and good men, nay and even of bad men themselves too; contrary to all our natural notions and apprehensions of the attributes and will of God; destructive to the publick welfare and happiness of mankind, the health of our own bodies, the peace of our minds, and the support of our good name and reputation amongst wise and reasonable men: It is a subjecting our reason to vile affections, to inordinate and brutish appetites, to disorderly and ungoverned passions; which becomes a guilt, or a debt, to suffer such punishment as the iniquity of the offence deserves

serves in justice from the law-giver ; which punishment could never be forgiven but through the satisfaction of Christ. And,

Forgiven thro' Christ. That our sins are forgiven on account of this satisfaction offered by Christ, is plainly proved

from those many texts of scripture, which relate to this matter, and tell us that without shedding of blood there is no remission ; and that in the end of the world Christ once appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ; that by his stripes we are healed ; that his blood was shed for many for the remission of sin ; that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace : neither can this be any way inconsistent with those scriptures which make the love of God to men the inducement of his sending Christ into the world ; he loved and pitied them as his creatures, and in misery ; and was offended with them, as sinners ; and it was a mercy worthy himself to find for them a sacrifice equal to his infinite justice and holiness. Therefore

A christian's comfort. The great consolation of a christian centers in the assurance that our sins are blotted out by the merits of Christ ; for all have sinned, and come

short of the glory of God ; nay, God hath concluded all under sin ; and unless he himself had shewn us a way to happiness, we must for ever have remained under perplexities from the sense of our guilt, and fears of divine wrath. On the contrary, this doctrine of forgiveness of sins gives all believers the highest comfort and the greatest sense of the goodness of God, who has thus reconciled mercy to justice, and freely has released those debts we never should have been able to have paid to the offended Deity. And we should by these considerations be inflamed with the most exalted love of our heavenly Father, who has given his Son to die for us ; this should raise in us the highest gratitude to the blessed Jesus, who became the Son of man, to make us the children of God ; and should make us always remember that we are no longer our own, but are bought with a price no less than the blood of Jesus. Yet Christ delivers no man from the punishment

When effectual. of sin, who is not first delivered from the service and dominion of it ; therefore no man who continues in the service and dominion of sin, can expect to be delivered from the punishment thereof. Christ has indeed given himself a propitiatory sacrifice, a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation for the sins of the world ; but it is not that the whole world or that any particular persons, should absolutely and unconditionally be thereby excused from the punishment of sin ; but that all those who, by true repentance, turn from sin, and become righteous, should obtain remission and reconciliation with God for he did not die that he might indulge men in sin, but that he might save them from it. Christ has indeed brought life and immortality to light, and opened an abundant entrance into the kingdom

kingdom of God; but it is not that any unreformed and unrenewed nature should be made partaker of that spiritual happiness, or be admitted to have a share in those pure and undefiled rewards; but that those who have broken off their sins by repentance, and their iniquities by righteousness, should be entertained at the eternal supper of the lamb: For, as impossible as it is for God to cease to be holy, or for the purity of the divine nature to be reconciled to sin, so impossible it is for a wicked man to obtain remission whilst he continues wicked, or for a sinner to be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. Be not deceived, saith St. Paul; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, that is, no unrighteous person, that continues in the practice of any known sin, shall inherit the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 2. Wherefore, as God hath promised us the forgiveness of our sins on no other condition, but that of our sincere faith and repentance, and our forgiving the trespasses of our brethren against us, we must endeavour daily to die unto sin, that we may live unto God; and as we expect forgiveness, we must be ready to forgive one another.

IV. In the *eleventh* ARTICLE of our christi- *The resurrection of the body* an faith we profess a belief in *the resurrection of the body*; which we must believe as a necessary *same body*. and infallible truth; that as it is appointed for all men once to die, so it is also determined that all men should rise from death; a doctrine perfectly agreeable to right reason, and to our natural notions of the attributes of God. The generality of the heathens of old, and the infidels of latter times, make this one of their great objections against christianity; upon the pretence of it's impossibility. *Opposed by infidels.* The heathens think it contrary to the course of nature, that any thing should return from a state of perfect corruption to its proper form, or that a body perfectly dead should be again restored to life. And it is true, that among the works of nature they could never observe any action or operation that did or could produce such an effect; so that by natural light we cannot discover that God will raise the dead: for, that depending upon the will of God, it can be no other ways known than by his own declarations; yet this doctrine, when made known by revelation, evidently contains nothing in it contrary to right reason. For we are to consider the possibility of things, not so much depending upon the power of nature, as upon the power of the God of nature. It is nevertheless to be proved, by the creation of the world out of nothing, that it is altogether *Proved by reason.* as easy for God to raise the body again after death, as to create and form it at first; it being a less effect of power to raise a body when resolved into dust, or where-
I
soever

soever dispersed and destroyed, than to make all things out of nothing by a single command.

An objection thereto.

I know there is a popular objection, which at first view may carry some difficulty in it, against this article of our faith; as for example, How can bodies devoured by men-eaters, who live on human flesh, or bodies eaten by fishes, and turned to their nourishment, and those fishes eaten by men, and converted into the substance of their bodies, recover their own bodies at the resurrection of the dead?

Answered by reason.

Wherefore, to clear this difficulty, among many other sufficient proofs, it must be considered, that the body of man is no other than a successive thing, continually losing something of the matter it had before, and gaining new; so that it is certain from experience, that men frequently change their bodies, and that the body a man hath at any time of his life, is as much his own body, as that which he hath when death separates body and soul. Wherefore, if the matter of the body, which a man had at any time of his life, be raised, it is as much his own and the same body as that which he had at his death; which does clearly solve the forementioned difficulty, since any of those bodies he had at any time before he was eaten are as much his own as that which was eaten. Moreover, let it be considered, that in like manner as in every grain of corn there is contained a small imperceptible seed, or natural faculty which is itself the intire future blade and ear, and in due season, when all the rest of the grain is corrupted, unfolds itself visibly into the form; so our present mortal and corruptible body may be but the out-coat, as it were, of some hidden, and a present imperceptible part of nature, which at the resurrection shall discover itself in it's proper form, by which way also in nature there cannot possibly be any confusion of bodies: therefore it is not without some weight, that St. Paul made use of the same comparison, and that the same similitude is alledged by the ancient fathers of the church. But should we as we ought consider the things without us, the natural changes and chances in every thing and person will raise the probability of our resurrection from the dead. At night the day dies, and rises with the new morning; the summer dies into winter, when the earth becomes a general sepulchre; but when the spring appears, nature revives and flourishes; the corn lies buried in the ground, and being corrupted, revives and multiplies: and can we think that man, the lord of all these things that die and revive for him, should be kept under the bands of death, never to rise again, which tho' it appeared impossible to many of the heathens, yet some of the wisest of them thought otherwise, as they are quoted by Grotius in his truth of the christian religion. But,

John ✓ 30

If we search the scriptures, we shall find plainly that the resurrection of the body, from divine revelation, is clear. God hath not only promised it, but in several instances exemplified it for our satisfaction. I know, says Job, that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and tho' after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, &c. And the prophet Daniel tells us, that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Besides, if these proofs will not take place, let them hearken unto fact. The ears of the Lord were open to the voice of Elijah, for the dead child of the widow of Sarepta; for when he prayed, the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. Elisha raised the child of the Shunamite from death; nor did that power he had die together with him: for when they were burying a dead man, they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha; and when the man was let down and touched the body of Elisha, he revived and stood upon his feet. These are examples out of the Old Testament. But

In the Old Testament.

By facts.

If we search the gospels, we shall find that remarkable argument of Christ himself, when he put the Sadducees to silence; As touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read, saith our Saviour, that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; which argument astonished the multitude, and silenced the Sadducees: and if it does not astonish and silence the Infidels and Socinians of our days, they must be accounted more hardened in their unbelief than the Sadducees of old, who could not reply to so cogent a proof of the resurrection. And again, he cautions his disciples to fear him that can destroy body and soul in hell. If then the body is capable of torment in hell, it must be raised from the grave, and united to its soul again, before it can pass from the grave to that state of punishment. He promises a recompence at the resurrection of the just, to those that relieve the poor, the maimed, the blind, and the lame. He positively declares in St. John, that the hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. He calls himself the resurrection and the life. And we are told in the Revelation, that the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave deliver up the dead which are in them, in order to be judged, every man according to their works. And St. Paul, defending himself before the Roman governor, openly professes his belief of the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

unjust. To some of the philosophers he also appeared to be a setter-forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection: and this apostle declares, that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad; and, that the Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. He describes the manner of the resurrection to the Thessalonians, that the dead in Christ shall rise first; and with the Corinthians, he argues from the certainty of Christ's resurrection to the necessity of ours: which texts sufficiently prove that the resurrection of the body was delivered as a necessary article of faith from the beginning of christianity, and that it is still the expectation of the faithful; for if the dead rise not, christians are of all men most miserable. All which

By facts.

doctrine was confirmed, when our Saviour restored to life the ruler of the synagogue's daughter; and raised up the widow's only son that was dead; and by restoring to life his friend Lazarus, who had been dead and buried four days: but all these instances were exceeded in our Saviour's own resurrection, which so infinitely manifested his power and divinity. So that there can be no doubt of the truth of a resurrection from the dead: it is certain that this resurrection will be

Its certainty and universality.

universal: all mankind, that have laid down their own bodies, and committed them to the grave, shall receive them again; there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Hence it appears that the folly of those who have no other hope to rest upon but that of atheism and infidelity, is greater than can be expressed in words, or than can rightly be conceived by any imagination. For, what is the state of such a person, when God taketh away his soul? can he be sure there is no God? or can he demonstrate to himself, that there will be no future state? the hardiest unbeliever never yet pretended to have demonstration in this case. And if he had, yet all the comfort, all the hopes, that could be built even upon that, would be but the hope of a beast, the expectation of perishing as if he had never been. For what is the hope of the unbeliever, when God taketh away his soul; I should say, when fate or chance taketh away his soul? and on what ground can the confidence of the Atheist rely? his expectations at best are thin as a spider's web; and his hopes as the light chaff, which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. His prosperity and mirth can be but for a moment, and his adversity must of necessity terminate in despair. For what relief is to be expected from fate or chance, which has no understanding? and what support is that man capable of in the days of affliction,

Sund. 5.] *Of the Resurrection of the Body.* 101

affliction, who does not believe things are guided by a wise hand, which can turn every thing finally to our advantage.

The bodies of good christians, now liable to pains, and diseases, and death, shall then die no more, but shall be equal unto the angels; like them they shall become immortal in their duration, and consequently freed from all those troublesome accidents to which they are now exposed; for the reward being eternal, the subject of it must be eternal also. Therefore, says the apostle, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. The bodies of good men, tho' now vile and corruptible, subject to filth and deformity by nature, shall be raised glorious, and splendid, and bright, they shall shine like the sun, and shall be fashioned like to the glorious body of our blessed Saviour: though now subject to weariness, to impotency, and to decays, shall be raised nimble, strong, and active; they shall be able to follow the Lamb wherever he goeth; they shall be endowed with such strength and vigour, as shall support them for ever in the same state, without any decay or change. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. Though now acted by vital spirits, it shall then be possessed and acted by the Holy Spirit; it shall be refined, and become a proper instrument for the operations of our minds, upon whom they must serve and depend. It is sown a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body. But,

The bodies of the wicked will be fitted to that eternal punishment they have drawn upon themselves, wherein they will always suffer, without consuming, under that dreadful sentence, Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire. Therefore,

This faith of the resurrection of the body should make us reverence ourselves, and not pollute our bodies with sensual and brutal lusts, but by purity and sobriety to prepare them for that honour and happiness they are designed for: it should support us under those miseries and infirmities to which our bodies are subject in this life; since when we take them up again, they shall be no more liable to pains or diseases, or to dissolution; for death will be swallowed up in victory. By this faith we are comforted upon the death of our religious friends and relations, who are not perished, but fallen asleep, and shall awake again in greater perfection and glory at the last day. This should influence us to promote not only our own, but the improvement of saving knowledge as far as lies in our power, to curb vice and encourage virtue, especially among those with whom we have any friendship or authority. This should arm us against the fear of our own death, since we are assured that after our bodies are crumbled into dust, and become the food of worms, they shall be quickened at the general resurrection, and be changed, and

made glorified bodies, by the promise and mighty power of God. And especially this should make us exercise ourselves to keep our consciences void of offence, both to God and man, that we may not forfeit that blessed immortality of our whole man, body and soul, which our blessed Saviour hath promised to all those that persevere in his service all the days of their mortal life.

Of the life everlasting.

V. In the *twelfth* ARTICLE of our christian faith we profess to believe that there is a *life everlasting*; a life which comprehends an everlasting duration, to which all shall be raised after death, the wicked as well as the righteous. Therefore when we read that the wicked shall be destroyed, and perish, and for ever die, we are to understand, not that they shall be turned into nothing, but that they shall for ever lose the presence and favour of God, be condemned to a wretched, hopeless state of anguish, remorse and despair, and be tortured with the worm that never dies, and in the fire that shall never be put out. But the righteous shall receive the utmost perfection of which their nature is capable; they shall partake of the glory which the Father hath given to the Son, and shall be one, as the Father and Christ are one. For,

The life and immortality, which Christ hath brought to light, and which he hath promised to all his faithful disciples, is a translation from a state of dulness and anxiety, trouble, affliction, disappointments, vexations, real grief, solid cares, and at the best but of imaginary pleasures, to a state of true happiness and content, and manly and rational pleasures, pleasures not interrupted by sickness or any sad accidents, nor dulled by being weary of them, or cloyed with them, not disturbed either by the insults of our enemies, or the concernments for our miserable friends, or our own inequality of temper. In that state all the powers and faculties of our souls will be advanced to the highest perfection that they are capable of. And we shall live in perfect ease and peace, in perfect freedom and liberty, in a perfect enjoyment of ourselves. Then our bodies that slept in the dust shall be raised again and united to our souls, to live in the city of the great King, the heavenly Jerusalem, a paradise of pleasure, a country of perpetual light and bliss, where the glory of the Lord fills the place, and where every object that presents itself adds a new beauty to it, and contributes to the increase of our delight. But

To complete the whole, we are assured that the inheritance we expect is incorruptible, and fadeth not away; that our house in heaven is eternal; and that death shall have no more power over us. There is no dispute concerning the everlasting happiness of the righteous; it being evident, that God in his infinite bounty may reward the sincere obedience of his creatures as much beyond the merit of their own weak and imperfect works as he

sees proper: Yet the everlasting punishment threatened to the wicked has seemed to many a great difficulty; since it is certain, from our natural notions of the attributes of God, that no man shall be punished beyond the just demerit of his transgression. But those who consider the nature of human actions must confess that God is just, and that every one who wilfully offends him deserves eternal punishment. Because a rational and moral man not only has in himself a power of acting, which is in common to him with the irrational creatures; but he has moreover a still higher principle or power of directing his actions, with some determinate views, and to some certain and constant end. He has a power of judging before-hand, concerning the consequences of his actions, concerning the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the end he aims at; and he has a power of recollecting, after the action is done, whether he acted with a good or an evil view. He can either follow the irregular motions of all his appetites and passions, as do the beasts that perish, or he can restrain and over-rule their solicitation, by attending to the guidance of a superior light of reason and religion. Nay, a man cannot indeed but have some view and design in every thing he does: Even when he abandons himself most implicitly to the brutal guidance of mere appetite and passion, still he does it with some view; and with a consciousness which beasts have not, that he knowingly and deliberately chuses to aim at some mean and unworthy end. Hence arises that judgment of reflection which we call conscience; by which a man either approves or condemns his own past actions, and apprehends that he shall accordingly be approved or condemned by him also to whom he must finally give account of himself. If a man, in the general course of his life, accustoms himself to consider these things before-hand, that is, if he will behave himself as a rational creature; if he accustoms himself in all his actions to consider the reason and equity of things, to consider what is reasonable for himself to do, or for him to expect should be done by another; to consider what is agreeable to the will of God, and likely to be approved at the bar of an impartial and all-seeing judge: if this (I say) be his main directing principle, and the point which he constantly keeps in view, his actions, generally speaking, will not fail to be virtuous and good.

God's justice vindicated in punishing the wicked eternally.

Because man sins wilfully.

Against his conscience.

On the contrary, if a man's principles be loose and atheistical; if he has no sense of the reason and equity of things, nor apprehension of the righteous judgment of God; if his views be no other than the satisfying of his appetites, the gratification of his passions, the pursuing his present interests, and pleasing his own unreasonable self.

The case of the atheists.

self-will : it cannot be but his actions will be generally immoral and vicious.

All wicked men are self-condemned.

And as there never was any person in any age or country upon earth, but judged himself injured by any violence or fraud put by another upon himself, the case is precisely the same, whenever any fraud or violence is used by him towards another ; and therefore the judgment passed by him in that case upon other men, is in fact a judgment passed by him upon himself. The same may be said concerning any other known instance of wickedness, concerning every kind of impiety, unrighteousness, or debauchery. The person who commits the crime always condemns himself, and is conscious that he deserves to be punished. Men may divert and turn away their thoughts from the unpleasant subject, by variety of amusements, and numberless vain imaginations : They may flatter themselves as they please with objections against the unalterable and essential difference of virtue and vice, and resolve to say within themselves, though they can never really be persuaded of it, that they shall have peace, tho' they walk in the imagination of their own hearts, to add one sin to another ; they may confidently and presumptuously dispute and argue in general, that all actions are naturally and originally alike ; that morality is but a fiction of speculative men ; and the notion of vice and virtue only a creature of the laws or customs of nations. But the judgment in particular, that every wicked man necessarily and immediately makes concerning any unjust action of another, by which he himself happens to suffer, will for ever convict him of knowing well that difference of moral good and evil which he is not willing to acknowledge, or which, however, he is not willing to make the rule of his own behaviour. This is what the apostle calls the law written in men's hearts, by which they are a law unto themselves, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or excusing one another ; therefore it is certain men are naturally conscious of the difference of good and evil, and of the consequent desert of their own actions : It is natural for them to apprehend, that this judgment of their own consciences is the judgment that God also passes upon them ; and the scripture very clearly affirms that it is so. 192

Their excuses for sinning are vain.

The sense of guilt is so necessarily uneasy upon the mind of man, that even the most hardened sinners are perpetually endeavouring to shift off the blame of their wickedness from themselves, and to throw the fault upon whatever comes in their way. Sometimes the reason of their wickedness is, because God has not made them better than they are : And who has resisted his will ? Sometimes it is the devil that tempts them : And how can frail man withstand so potent and so cunning a deceiver ?

Sometimes

Sometimes it is the original corruption of their nature : And who can alter the condition to which he was born ? Sometimes it is the general fashion and custom of the world : And who can be singular in opposing so violent a torrent ? The apostle cuts off at once both these and all other excuses, by determining distinctly, that whatever aggravations or extenuations of sin may or may not arise from external circumstances, yet sin itself, the nature and essence of sin, consists entirely in the free choice of a man's own will ; and that his guilt is always just so much in proportion as his choice deviates from the dictates of his reason. Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed.

Let it therefore be observed, *first*, that no man can say it is unreasonable, that they, who by wilful and stubborn disobedience to their almighty Creator, and most merciful Benefactor, and by the habitual practice of unrepented wickedness, have, during the state of trial, made themselves unfit for the enjoyment of that happiness, which God has prepared for them that love and obey him, should be eternally rejected and excluded therefrom. *Why the wicked should finally suffer eternal punishment.* As to the continuance of this punishment, no man can presume, in our present state of ignorance and darkness, to be able truly to judge, barely by the strength of his own natural reason, what in this respect is or is not consistent with the wisdom, and justice, and goodness of the supreme Governor of the world ; since we neither know the place, nor kind, nor manner, nor circumstances, nor degrees, nor all the ends and uses of final punishment of wicked men. But we are certain that the justice of God will abundantly vindicate itself, and all mouths shall be stopped before him, and be forced to acknowledge the exact righteousness of all his judgments ; and to condemn their own folly and wickedness ; for as much as the degrees or severity of the punishment, which shall be inflicted on the impenitent, shall be exactly proportionate to their sins, as a recompence of their crime, so that no man shall suffer more than he has deserved, by the evil of his ways.

This faith therefore should deter us from sin, and excite us to repentance and holiness of life ; *How we should be inflamed thereby.* and breed in us an awe of the Great God, a jealous God, a consuming fire, a God that will not be mocked. This should teach us to tremble at his word, at the fierceness of his wrath, and the dreadfulnes of his vengeance ; and to set the highest value on the plenteous redemption wrought out for us by the blood of Christ, whereby all true believers are purged from their sins, and not only freed from eternal misery, but made inheritors of eternal happiness. This should inflame our souls with earnest desires of those heavenly joys which flow from the vision of God, and stir up our endeavours after that holiness without which it can be enjoyed by

no man. This should teach us to contemn this world, and to set our affections on things above; so that forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we may press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ. This should encourage us to take up the cross of Christ, and make us chearful under the sufferings of this life, knowing that they are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us; and that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Therefore,

The doctrines of christianity cannot be amended.

To conclude, the christian religion proposes no doctrines for our belief, but such as are discovered by revelation, and most agreeable to a sound and unbiassed judgment. All the doctrines of our Saviour have a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform men's lives and correct their manners: none of them were calculated for the gratification of men's idle curiosities, the busying and amusing them with airy and useless speculations; much less were they intended for an exercise of our credulity, or a trial how far we could bring our reason to submit to our faith: But as, on the one hand, they were plain and simple, and such as, by their agreeableness to the rational faculties of mankind, did highly recommend themselves to belief; so, on the other hand, they had an immediate relation to practice, and were the proper ground and foundation upon which all human and divine virtues were naturally to be built.

The truth not affected by religious disputes.

And, notwithstanding the many differences and disputes about particular doctrines among christians (excepting such as have intolerably corrupted the very fundamental doctrines, and even the main design itself of the whole christian dispensation) these disputes among christians have not been like those among the philosophers, concerning the whole scheme and system of things, but only concerning particular explications of particular doctrines; which kind of disputes do not at all affect the certainty of the whole religion itself, nor ought in reason to be any manner of hindrance to the effect, which the plain and weightier and confessedly more important fundamental doctrines ought to have upon the hearts and lives of those who profess their belief in God, and acknowledge it their duty to obey his commands. 20

SUNDAY VI.

I. *Of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, why it was ordained; and* II. *Of the preparation before receiving it, by examination of conscience, repentance, faith, obedience, and making satisfaction.* III. *Of those duties to be done at the time of receiving, and* IV. *After receiving; and the benefit of frequent*

quent communion. V. *Of the honour due to God's Name ; and of the sins against it, as blasphemy, swearing, including asseratory, promissory, and unlawful oaths.* VI. *Of perjury.* VII. *Of vain oaths, or common swearing, cursing, and the sin of them ;* and VIII. *Of vows.*

I. **H**AVING thus learned, and resolved to believe, ALL the ARTICLES of the christian faith, our next duty is to partake of the Lord's Supper ; which is justly reckoned one of the most important actions of our holy religion ; whereby we repeat and renew the covenant we made with God in our baptism ; distinguish ourselves to be the disciples of the blessed Jesus ; and are admitted to the highest act of communion with his sacred person : For thereby our corrupt nature is purified, by applying the merits of Christ's blood ; and our weakness is strengthened, by receiving the influence of his grace, which he has purchased for us by his death. But he that lives in the habitual practice of any known sin, without repentance must not approach to the holy table, lest he be found to mock God, and condemn his authority. Nevertheless it may not be inferred, that the danger of unworthy receiving makes it safest to abstain from receiving at all, or at least to receive but seldom ; because the danger of neglecting and contemning a plain command of our Saviour is more hazardous to our salvation, than performing it without some due qualification for to make it worthy. Therefore, the duty being necessary to be performed, the true consequence we should draw from the danger of performing it unworthily, should be to excite ourselves to care and diligence in preparing ourselves for the due discharge of it ; but never to delude ourselves by false reasons, to such a neglect as will certainly increase our guilt.

The Lord's Supper.

Its benefits.

There lies an obligation upon all christians to receive the holy communion, from the plain and positive command of our blessed Saviour, to do this in remembrance of him. This makes it a necessary and perpetual duty incumbent upon all christians ; and to live in the neglect of a plain law of the author of our religion is no way consistent with the character we profess of being the disciples of Christ. This worship is peculiar to the christian religion, and thereby, in a particular manner, we proclaim ourselves followers of the blessed Jesus ; upon which account the primitive christians (at least in some places) never held their publick assemblies without it ; and the faithful that joined in all the other parts of publick worship, never failed in partaking of the communion of the body and blood of Christ. But before we can be qualified to participate of this holy sacrament, we must understand the nature and end of its institution, or we cannot offer an acceptable service to God. And therefore,

A necessary and perpetual duty.

Remember

Why ordained by Christ. Remember that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was ordained for a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits we receive thereby. The Son of God made man, by suffering death upon the cross, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world: he intercedes for us by virtue of this sacrifice in heaven; so we on earth should commemorate this his sacrifice on the cross, by offering bread and wine, which after consecration become the representatives of his body and blood, which in this sacrament are offered to God the Father, that he may be favourable to us, and give us his grace, through the merits of the death of Christ. And,

II. As we ought not, and must not neglect coming to this holy sacrament, so no body must dare to approach that holy table without a due preparation; carefully weighing what is necessary to be done, both *before, at, and after* receiving the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. And

Things to be done before receiving. First, let a man examine his life and conversation by the rule of God's word. For, a life governed by the precepts of the gospel, is the best preparation for this sacrament; because he that believes the christian religion, and makes it his constant business

Examination. to perform what our Saviour hath enjoined, has all that substantial preparation, which qualifies christians to partake of this ordinance, and ought therefore to receive when any opportunities present; for this holy sacrament does not so much oblige us to new duties, as it enables us to make good those obligations, which we in our baptism have promised and vowed to perform. Let a man therefore examine himself never so much, fast never so strictly, and pray never so fervently, if his life has not been pious towards GOD, just towards his neighbour, and sober in reference to himself; without effectual resolutions, all those duties, in which he employs himself before he receives, will never be able to make him a fit guest at God's table: they are indeed good preparative helps, when they repair those breaches sin has made in our souls; but without steady purposes of amendment, they are of no value in the sight of God, and will not be able to qualify us for a worthy participation of the body and blood of Christ. If our lives prepare not the way for our offerings, we approach the holy altar in vain. We should hereby be deterred from receiving only out of custom, or in order to qualify ourselves for some temporal or worldly employment; but pious christians, who are sincerely wearied and grieved with the burden of their sins, ought not to be discouraged in their duty; because here they will find their proper remedy; here they will meet with that strength and assistance, which is so necessary to enable them to lead that holy life, which they purpose for the time

time to come, beginning it with a strict examination of the state of their own souls. Concerning which take these directions:

First, Recollect your baptismal vow*; endeavour to rivet in your soul a just sense of those mercies promised on God's part, and the particular duties to which you in common with all christians are obliged thereby. For our chief business at the Lord's table, is to renew our baptismal covenant with God.

Secondly, Then inquire by thy conscience, the candle of the Lord, how thou hast broken that covenant made in thy baptism, either by thought, word, or deed. We transgress by our thoughts, when we are contriving and compassing any forbidden thing; but irregular thoughts which spring up in our minds, and are but little in our power, are neither sins nor matter of punishment, any farther than they are causes or principles of a sinful choice and resolution; because as we assent or dissent to those motions that are in our minds, so will our thoughts be virtuous or sinful. But it is not enough to know what is sin: for we must also understand the true state and condition of our souls, our repentance must be full and complete, and extend to all those particulars wherein we have transgressed the laws of God; and till we discover all our follies and infirmities we cannot amend, or so much as watch against them; for which purpose you will be greatly assisted by the *heads of self-examination* in the *devotions* at the end of *this* BOOK.

Our repentance by this means may in some measure keep pace with our errors and failings, when this examination is frequently repeated before the Lord's supper; and thus we may prevent the insupportable weight of the sins of a whole life falling upon us all at once, when we may neither have understanding nor leisure to recollect ourselves, much less to exercise any fit and proper acts of repentance towards God or man. And, in this examination, let us consider the sins that most easily beset our weakest part, by nature or custom least defensible; for the devil, like a skilful general, will attack us where we lie most exposed, hoping, by gaining that post, to make the town quickly surrender at his discretion. For which reason, in surveying the state of our minds, we should have an eye to those places that will least bear an assault; those appetites or passions that most frequently occasion our fall from God's grace. Again, we should consider the several aggravations of our follies, whether committed against the light of our minds, with the free consent of our wills, and in despite of the checks of our own conscience: whether they have been often repeated, whether transient acts or habitual disorders? And we ought to observe all those previous steps that have made

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* See the baptismal vow in page 56.

us transgress, which have been fatal to the corrupting of our innocence, and the occasions of betraying our virtue.

Humiliation.

This makes us thoroughly acquainted with our selves and our own corruption; a knowledge, which is of the greatest consequence. By this we are drove to repentance, as the only cure for that guilt which oppresses our souls, and for which we lie at the mercy of God's vengeance: we are disposed to humility, and gain a lively sense of God's power and of our frequent errors and miscarriages: we keep our accounts clear and even; and it is an admirable means to advance us towards christian perfection, by making us careful to avoid those faults for the future, which we have discovered in our former lives and conversations, not only thro' fear of punishment, but because we have offended so good and gracious a God. And,

The several parts of confession.

This duty should be accompanied with *confession* of sins to God, which is the judgment a man passes upon himself, either of approbation or of condemnation, whenever he deliberately weighs his own actions: or it is the sentence, which his reason suggests that God, the judge of all the earth, will pass upon him. Yet, it is not barely a repetition of the faults we are guilty of to God Almighty; but it is such an acknowledgment of our faults as is accompanied with shame for them, with hatred to them, and with resolutions to amend them. So that confession of sin doth plainly include, *First*, that we be heartily sensible of our sins

Contrition.

past, and sorry for them, and angry at ourselves for having committed them. And this is that which in common speech we call *contrition*. *Secondly*, that this

Confession.

sense, this sorrow, and this indignation, do put us upon applying ourselves to God, and there with shame and confusion laying open our miserable condition before him, and humbly and heartily begging his mercy and favour thro' the merits and intercession of our Lord Jesus. And this is that which is *confession* in the precise strict sense of the word. *Thirdly*,

Purpose of amendment.

that at the same time we enter into stedfast and serious purposes to amend what hath been amiss in us, and to live more carefully, more obediently to the laws of God for the future. In such cases where we have been preserved from guilt, we must give glory to God, and thankfully acknowledge that grace, which hath restrained us from sin. For, as no man is qualified for the mercy of God that doth not devoutly confess his sins, so, if we do consider what is imported in confession, we shall be convinced that it is a thing, that in the very nature of it must needs, above all other things we can do, recommend us to God; for by approaching to God with an hearty sense of our sins, and confessing them before him with truly contrite and penitent hearts, we make the best reparation

Sund. 6.] *Preparation for the Lord's Supper.* III

ration we are capable of, for the affronts and injuries which by our sins we have committed against his divine majesty. And, the more particular our confession, the better it is, and the more acceptable it will be, because this particular confession is an argument and an expression of the sincerity of our repentance, and shews that we have searched and examined our hearts to the bottom, and that we harbour no concealed affection to any particular sin whatsoever, but that we are willing to bring out every enemy that speaks opposition to God and his laws, to be slain before him. And *fourthly*, when our sins have been not only against God, but against our neighbour, we must

make him *satisfaction*: we must restore whatever we have unjustly taken from him, by fraud or force; we must vindicate his reputation, if we have blemished it by calumny and evil speaking; we must endeavour his recovery, by making him sensible of such sins and dangerous errors as we have drawn him into, that he may be put into a way of pardon, before the throne of divine justice. So we must from our hearts forgive those that have injured us, if we expect that God should forgive us our faults; resting in a sure confidence that God's grace will be so effectually conveyed into our souls by this sacrament, as to seal God's pardon of all our sins for Christ's sake, provided we perform our part in forsaking them and obeying his commandments for the future. *Faith.*

If we do not strive after this temper of mind, it is impossible we should be fit guests at the Lord's table; for this was the end of his death, which will deliver none from the punishment due to sin, who do not make use of that grace he has purchased to overcome the power thereof. How dare we pretend to commemorate our Saviour's sufferings, if we do not renounce and detest what was the cause thereof? Or, how can we expect to be received by our Lord, if we do not declare war against his enemies, nor in the least prosecute those sinful lusts and affections, which tormented and nailed him to the cross? For it becomes us to lay aside all resentment against those that have injured us; when we go to commemorate that infinite love, which took pity of us, when we were enemies to him. Such love should work us into a conformity, and make us desirous to be reconciled to those that have offended us; to be at peace with all the world, as we desire to be loved and forgiven, and to be at peace with our Redeemer. Can we scruple to forgive others, who are undone ourselves, unless we are forgiven? Is it not in vain to ask pardon, when we find no inclination in our hearts to grant it to our neighbours? Or, can we forbear giving what we are able to the poor, when we go to commemorate so much bounty and liberality exercised towards us? It is

Resolutions of obedience.

Means.

Charity.

our duty to do good to all men, because they are God's creatures; but

but necessitous christians must partake of our beneficence, because they are members of the same body, and are particular objects of the mercy and tenderness of our blessed Redeemer, who has made it one of the marks of the sincerity of our love to God: for whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels from him, How dwelleth the love of God in him? Which sincerity of our love to God can never be so well attested as when we are calling to mind the divine love displaying itself to us in the bleeding wounds of our Saviour Christ.

*Quickning of
graces.*

Prayer ought to have its due proportion in our preparatory exercises for the holy sacrament; because it helps us to that temper of mind which makes us welcome guests at God's table, and fills our thoughts with such spiritual objects, as are proper to entertain them at such opportunities. Our thoughts of business and affairs must as much as possible be laid aside, when we solemnly approach God's presence; and our thoughts should be applied entirely to such spiritual subjects, as the christian sacrifice naturally brings into our minds. And prayer in its own nature takes off our thoughts from the things of the world, and all sensible entertainments, and raises them to God, and those things that concern our eternal life. Prayer masters our evil habits by a lively sense of our duty, and fortifies us against temptation, by the strength it communicates to our souls. Wherefore, when we design to approach the holy table, we should prepare the way by devotions, and by attending the prayers of the church in publick. And

Devotion.

*The necessity of
these graces.*

Whoever presumes to come to this supper of the Lord without this wedding garment, must expect to be cast out into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. For tho' God bears with such a sinner for a while, his damnation is sure, if not prevented by a timely repentance; if he will continue either wilfully to neglect this his bounden duty, or the means to receive it worthily, his punishment will be intolerable. For, who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings? Therefore the church exhorts us to repent of our sins, or else not to come to that holy table; lest after the taking of that holy sacrament, the devil enter into us as he entered into Judas, and fill us full of all iniquities, and bring us to destruction both of body and soul. And because it is requisite, that no man should come to the holy communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience: therefore if there be any person who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth farther comfort or counsel;

*The usefulness
of a spiritual
guide.*

then let him go to some discreet and learned minister of God's word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with

ghostly

ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruples and doubtfulness.

Thus having laid down what is necessary to qualify a christian to receive the Lord's supper, I can't better sum up our duty in these particulars than in that short exhortation of the church : Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways ; draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort ; and make your humble confession to Almighty God. And this brings me to the next part of our duty, how we ought to behave *at* the time we approach the Lord's table to receive this holy sacrament, and also *after* we have received the same.

III. Having duly reflected on our own unworthiness, and meditated upon the sufferings of Christ, his infinite love to mankind therein, his propitiation for sins, and our obligations to thankfulness arising from thence, we should receive the holy sacrament with great reverence and devotion ; with particular attention of mind, accompanying him that administers throughout the whole office ; which is admirably framed and composed to express all those pious dispositions and devout affections, which well prepared minds ought to exercise upon such occasions : our repentance in the confession and absolution : our charity in relieving our poor brethren, in praying for all conditions of men, and in forgiving those that have offended us : our humility in acknowledging our unworthiness : our resolutions of better obedience, in presenting ourselves a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto God. And at the time of consecration, when thou seekest the bread broken and the wine poured out, remember how Christ suffered for us, how his head was crowned with thorns, his back scourged at a pillar ; his hands nailed to the cross ; and the last drop of his blood spilt with a spear for our sins ; look with an eye of faith on him, who is the sacrifice once offered for the sins of the whole world : and beg of God the Father that he would accept of the satisfaction, and pardon all our sins, and be reconciled to thee, for the merits of his beloved Son, who died for us. Consider what inexpressible thanks are due from us, for all that he has done to reconcile us to God. Think on those great agonies of his soul which drew from him that utmost disconsolate exclamation, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ! and this will produce in thy soul a most hearty and sincere thanksgiving, and teach thee to admire the love of our Maker, who gave his only

*At receiving
meditate on
thy unworthi-
ness.*

*The sufferings
of Christ.*

*The atonement
wrought by
them.*

*Thankfulness
owing to him
for them.*

begotten Son to redeem mankind. And should not this love deter thee from sinning any more? And *264*

The benefits of the new covenant sealed in this sacrament. When you are about to receive, remember this sacrament is God's seal to the *new covenant*, in which we receive pardon of sins, grace to resist temptations, and a title to the inheritance of eternal bliss; yet upon no other condition than that we do also resolve to perform our part of the christian covenant promised in baptism, which resolution can then be in no wise better expressed than by an hearty *Amen* to that excellent form when the minister gives thee the bread and wine, saying, *The body of our Lord, &c.* And so conclude with your praises and thanksgivings in the hymns and devotions after the sacrament is received. While others are communicating, we may enlarge ourselves upon these subjects, always taking care that our private devotions give place to those that are publick; and that we lay aside our own prayers when the minister calls on us to join with him in the publick form of prayer: all which are particularly described in that devout treatise, called the *new week's preparation*; because the young communicant is there furnished with such directions for his devout behaviour, and beneficial joining with the minister during the office of administration, as I apprehend, are not to be met with elsewhere.

After receiving.

IV. But lest we should relapse into sin, by surprise, thro' our infirmities, or from more provoking facts; it concerns us to look about and revolve in our minds, how our conduct should be stated, and our life steered, *after* a worthy receiving of the holy sacrament. So, on our first retreat from this heavenly banquet

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Private prayer and thanksgiving.

we should in our closets pay God the tribute of fervent prayer and praise, that we may walk in the same course all the days of our life. This will be some guard and security to us, that we do not over hastily drench and mire ourselves in worldly affairs. We ought to watch over our own hearts with great application, and some anxiety; lest we should depart from our well grounded resolutions and deliberate vows; because this would render our last state worse than the first. If we sin wilfully

Not presently to return to worldly business.

after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth a certain fearful looking for of vengeance and fiery indignation. So that God is exasperated, our consciences raging, or laid waste, and those pardons and graces, which have been vouchsafed to us, will rise up in judgment against us, if

Remember good resolutions.

we warp from our duty. No lawful vow can ever be dispensed with because God is a party,* and nothing short of a divine revelation can be sufficient evidence that God will discharge any man from such a vow. And, *Danger of sin- ing.*

Thus the frequent use of the holy sacrament *Means for in-* is the likeliest means to increase our veneration *creasing our* and respect thereto. Because, tho' familiarity *regard to this* with the best of men may be apt to diminish *sacrament.* that respect, which was paid to them, by reason of those frailties and imperfections, which are sometimes mixed with very great virtues, and which are only discovered by a great intimacy with them; yet the oftner we converse with God in his holy ordinances, the more we shall admire his divine perfections, and the more we shall be disposed to conform ourselves to his will and example: Because an object of infinite perfection in itself, and of infinite goodness to us, will always raise our admiration, and heighten our esteem and respect, the more we contemplate it; it being the discovery of some imperfection where we thought there was none that abates the value and reverence we had for any thing or person.

Besides, frequent communion preserves a live- *Benefit of* ly sense of religion upon our minds, and invigo- *frequent com-* rates our souls with fresh strength and power to *munion.* perform our obligations. This strengthens that intimate union that ought to be inviolable between Jesus and the members of the mystical body of Christ. This is the proper nourishment of our souls, without which we can no more maintain our spiritual life, than we can our temporal without meat and drink. This raises in us strong ardours of love and consolation, so that it becomes the greatest torment we can endure to offend God, and our greatest delight to do his pleasure. This is the sovereign remedy against all temptations, by mortifying our passions, and spiritualizing our affections. For how can we love any sinful satisfactions, which crucified the Lord of glory, and fix our hearts upon perishing objects, when he only deserves the whole man as he requires? This ratifies and confirms to us the pardon of our sins, and repairs those breaches, which our follies have made within us. This fortifies our minds against all those afflictions and calamities, which are often the lot of the righteous in this miserable world; and administers to us such comfort and peace of conscience, as surpasses all understanding. *See*

V. We now proceed to the *third* command- *Honour due to* ment, or the giving GOD the *honour due unto* *God's name.* his NAME. The highest reverence is due to the name of God, in our thoughts, in our words, and in our ac-

* See vow in page 120, &c.

tions. Therefore when we mention the word of God, or any persons or things which have a relation to his worship or glory, with irreverence, it is, by just interpretation, denying to honour God in his name. And what the honouring of his name is, I apprehend, will be best understood by a due consideration of those particulars whereby it is dishonoured: for, the avoïding of these things will be the best way to honour his holy name.

Blasphemy. The first is BLASPHEMY, or speaking any evil thing of God; the highest degree of which is *curfing* him, or those persons or things that have a peculiar relation to God, or indeed curfing any of God's creatures, which are all the works of his hands. And this may not be committed in thought, word or deed, without the utmost outrage and prophanation: For this is what the Psalmist reckons in the highest degree of sins, where he distinguishes offenders into three feveral ranks; Ps. i. 1. The man that walketh in the counsel of the ungodly, the man that standeth in the way of finners, and the man that sitteth in the feat of the scornful; that is, of those who not only neglect, but also *scoff* at religion, and make a *mock* at that, which of all things in the world is of the greatest importance. Thus David, speaking of God's enemies, brands their curfing inwardly; and curfing openly, or to the face, is the devil's suggestion against Job. Thus St. Paul says, God's name may be blasphemed by our wicked actions; By breaking the law dishonourest thou God: For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you. And your fathers have blasphemed me, in that they have committed a trespass against me, saith the prophet Ezekiel.

Swearing. Secondly, we dishonour God by *swearing* *falsly* or *rashly*; because an oath is an invocation of God, or, an appeal to him to attest what we say to be true, whether the name of God be or be not expressly mentioned: For in all these cases a man does virtually call God to witness; and in so doing, he does by consequence invoke him as a judge and avenger, if what he swears be not true. There is indeed a great

When law-ful. use and even necessity of oaths, in many cases; which is so great, that human society can very hardly, if at all, subsist long without them. Government would many times be very insecure; and for the faithful discharge of offices of great trust, in which the welfare of the publick is nearly concerned, it is not possible to find any security equal to that of an oath; because the obligation of that reaches to the most secret and hidden practices of men, and takes hold of them, in many cases, where the penalty of no human law can have any awe or force upon them, and especially it is the best means of ending matters in debate. So mankind can never be fully satisfied where their estates or lives are concerned,

cerned, without the evidence is assured by an oath; and it is well known, that God himself requires in a *lawful* oath these three conditions, *truth, judgment, and righteousness*; in which sense oaths are generally divided into *assertory* and *promissory* oaths. And that is called an assertory *Assertory oaths.* oath, when a man affirms or denies upon oath a matter of fact, past, or present; when he swears that a thing was, or is so, or not so. And a promissory oath is a promise confirmed by an oath, which always *Promissory.* respects something future: which promise is called a vow, if it be made directly and immediately to God; but only an oath when made to man. I say then, that *202*

In every lawful oath there must be truth; we *When unlawful.* must take great care, when we are upon our oaths, that we say nothing but what we know or believe to be true; for there cannot be a greater provocation offered to almighty God, who is the God of truth, than to bring him in for witness and voucher to a falsehood: besides, to do this destroys the very end of taking oaths, which is to bring truth to light. Again, in every lawful oath there must be judgment; we must not swear rashly and unadvisedly, but in cool and sober thoughts, having duly considered how sacred a thing an oath is. Moreover, we must be fully satisfied that the occasion is every way fit and deserving of so sacred a seal. And finally, we must swear in righteousness; we must set aside all respects of relation or friendship, and all other grounds whatsoever of favour and affection to any party concerned; as also the considerations of interest or disadvantage that may happen to ourselves; regarding only the justice of the cause; whether it be that we give our oaths for the defence of the innocent, or punishment of the guilty: and we must take care that we swear not in a wrong case, though it were our own, and we should reap never so great a benefit in carrying our point. Hence,

From these three necessary conditions of swearing, in truth, in judgment, and righteousness, we may observe that an oath is an act of religious *The obligation of an oath.* worship, a part of that glory which we are to give to God, being an open acknowledgment of his justice and truth, and that he is every where present, and knows and sees all things, and will avenge himself upon the ungodly, particularly upon those who break this precept of his law. Wherefore it is not possible for men to lay a more sacred and solemn obligation upon their consciences, than by the religion of an oath, which is binding our souls with a bond; because he that sweareth, lays the strongest obligations upon himself, and puts his soul in pawn for the truth of what he swears to. So that this obligation of an oath can never be violated, but at the utmost peril of God's judgment and vengeance. And,

*God greatly
dishonoured by
perjury.*

VI. This will lead us to a true sense of that dishonour done to God by the sin of PERJURY, which is a solemn calling of God to witness the truth of that which we either know to be false, or do not know to be true. Such an oath implies a curse upon ourselves, and is a crime of so high a nature, that no man can possibly be guilty of it, who has any sense at all of religion remaining upon his mind: For he who knowingly and deliberately calls God to witness a falsehood, in order to deceive or wrong his neighbour, does openly disclaim the mercies of God, and challenges the Almighty to shew him no favour. Therefore

*Perjury, when
committed.*

Observe, when a man asserts upon oath what he knows to be otherwise, or promises what he does not intend to perform, his oath becomes perjury. In like manner, when a man promiseth upon oath to do that which is unlawful for him to do, because this oath is contrary to a former obligation, it is perjury. Again, when a man is uncertain whether what he swears to, be true, his oath is perjury, in the act, though not of the same degree of guilt with the former; because it is not so fully and directly against his conscience and knowledge. Men ought not to swear at a venture, but to be certain of the truth of what they assert upon oath. Consequently, no man ought positively to swear to the truth of any thing, but what he himself hath learned, or seen, or heard; which is the highest assurance men are capable of in this life. So also he is guilty of perjury in the same degree, who promiseth upon oath what he is not morally and reasonably certain he shall be able to do. Men are likewise guilty of perjury, who answer equivocally and doubtfully, or with reservation of something in their minds, thinking thereby to save the truth of what they say; for oaths should be attended with plainness and simplicity: for the use of oaths being to assure the persons to whom they are made, they must be taken in their sense: So there can be no greater affront to God, than to use his name to deceive our neighbour. Nor can any thing more directly overthrow the great end and use of oaths, which are for confirmation, and to put an end to strife amongst men; because equivocation and reservation leave the thing in debate in the same uncertainty it was before. Let not men, therefore, think by this device to save themselves harmless from the guilt of so great a sin; for, they do really increase it, by adding to their iniquity the impudent folly of mocking God, and deceiving their own souls. Men are also guilty of perjury after the act, who having a real intention, when they swear, to perform what they promised, yet afterwards neglect to perform their oath; not for want of power (for so long as that continues, the obligation ceaseth) but for want of a will, and due regard to the oath they have sworn.

Seeing

Seeing therefore that deliberate perjury is acting directly against a man's knowledge, which is one of the greatest aggravations of any crime; *Its guilt and danger.* I must add, that it is equally a sin against both tables, the highest affront to God, and of the most injurious consequence to our neighbour. By which the name of God is horribly abused, his judgment contemned, and his vengeance insolently held at defiance: By which also not only this or that particular person suffers wrong, but human society is injured thereby: The foundations of publick peace and justice, and the private security of every man's life and fortune, are at once overthrown: And the best and last way that the wisdom of men could devise for the decision of doubtful matters, is hereby defeated. Where it should be observed, that as there is no threatening added to any other commandment but to this and the second, it intimates to us, that next to idolatry and the worship of a false God, perjury is one of the greatest affronts that can be offered to our Creator; and may, without aggravation, be accounted one of those *The punishment of it.* sins that cry so loud to heaven, and quicken the pace of God's judgments upon the obstinate sinner, who will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. And also,

VII. From hence we learn the great sin of *Of common* that indecent as well as wicked custom of *rash swearing or* SWEARING in common conversation. *vain oaths.* Of which sin the first aggravation is, that they who are guilty of it are in perpetual danger of the crime of perjury: For he who uses himself to swear frequently and habitually, will never attend carefully, that what he swears to, be true. *Leads to perjury.* Nay, it is too just an observation, that they who are accustomed to this vice at all, are then apt to be most guilty of it, when they are most provoked, and most suspicious that what they affirm is not credible. To call upon God perpetually as a witness to mean and trivial matters, is a manifest want of reverence, and of a just sense of God and religion.

CURSING also is another part of the profanation of the name of God; for when men in common conversation use curses and imprecations against their brethren, it is either with an intention and desire that mischief may befall them; which is both malicious towards men, and also irreligiously thinking light of the curse of God: or else it is without any such desire or intention; and then it is profanely supposing God to have no regard to their behaviour. And these faults are the more inexcusable, because there cannot here be pretended, as in most other vices, any natural temptation. *No temptation to them.* There is no sensual pleasure in them, because they are not founded in the temper of the body:

no man, I think, is born with a swearing or cursing constitution, though it may be a man shall be naturally prone to anger or lust. Besides, there is as little profit as pleasure in them; for, the common and trivial use of oaths and curses makes them perfectly insignificant to their end, and is so far from giving credit to a man's word, that it rather weakens his credit: for common swearing and cursing always argue in a man a perpetual distrust of his own reputation, and is an acknowledgment that he thinks his bare word not worthy to be taken. Neither can they be said to adorn and fill a man's discourse; for it highly offends and grates upon all sober and considerate persons, who cannot be presumed with any manner of ease and patience to hear God so affronted upon every slight account.

*Admits of no
excuse, and
must be avoid-
ed.*

A crime for which men can plead no excuse. They who pretend to do it ignorantly, and not observing and knowing what they do, are inexcusable; because, certainly it is no extenuation of a fault, that a man hath got the habit of it so perfectly, that he commits it when he does not think thereof. Neither is that any just excuse, wherewith many deceive themselves, when they swear by any other thing, and not by their Maker: For this very precaution shews, that they could as easily, if they were careful, avoid the sin wholly, as attend to a particular circumstance in the manner of committing it. Which circumstance, nevertheless, does not at all hinder it from amounting in reality to the very same thing. For, as, in common speech, that usual prayer, Heaven bless or reward a man, is evidently of the very same import as if therein had been more expressly mentioned, God who dwelleth in heaven: so swearing by any creature does in truth amount to the same thing as swearing by the name of God, whose creature it is, and who alone indeed can finally be supposed to be appealed to for the truth of the thing affirmed and for the sincerity of the intention. A consideration which should make men oppose the beginning of this vice, lest it grow into a habit very hard to be overcome. It must be a great charity that can find out a way to reconcile a common custom of swearing with a serious belief of the christian religion.

Of vows.

VIII. The name of God is also profaned by careless and inconsiderate VOWS: When the matter of them is either unjust, impossible, or unreasonable; or the thing vowed be unprofitable, and of no tendency to promote true religion; or the manner of making the vow be rash and irreligious. Therefore the best and only good rule in this matter is, that among christians there is no use, no benefit, no encouragement given to any such thing as making any vow at all: For why should men needlessly bring snares upon their own souls, or entangle themselves in difficulties, where there is no command

The vows mentioned in the Old Testament are all either parts of the Jewish ceremonial law, which is now wholly abolished ; or else they signify only general resolutions of serving and obeying God, which can never too often nor, too seriously be renewed ; as when Jacob vowed, that the Lord should be his God ; that is, that he would always continue stedfast in the true religion. In the New Testament there is (I think) no one instance of any vow made by a christian : The vow of Aquila, and that of the four persons with whom St. Paul purified himself, being both of them vows which had been made before the men's conversion to christianity. Baptism indeed and the Lord's supper are solemn vows of obedience towards God ; but the matter of them is such as was before our indispensable duty : and such solemn renewing our holy resolutions of doing what is of absolute necessity to be done, is undoubtedly of great and perpetual use. But in other cases, vows are at best nothing but needless snares upon men ; and generally they are of superstitious and unwarrantable practice : For what is fit to be done, may be done without laying upon ourselves unnecessary obligations ; and such obligations can be of no benefit, but needlessly to involve men in snares and scruples. So that the best direction to be given to christians concerning this matter, is never to intangle themselves in any other obligations at all, but only take care to keep these sacred vows and resolutions, which they solemnly enter into at baptism and the supper of the Lord.

SUNDAY VII.

I. *Of the WORSHIP due to God's name ; setting forth the several parts of PRAYER.* II. *Of publick prayer, in the church, in the family.* III. *Of private prayer.* IV. *Of the necessary condition of prayer.* V. *Of its only object ; as also of its power and efficacy ; with answers to objections against this duty.* VI. *Of repentance, and the danger of delaying it ; and VII. Of fasting, as a part of repentance.*

I. **T**HE next duty we owe to God is *Worship.* *Worship.* **SHIP** : a duty peculiar to God alone ; and is to be performed both by our *souls* and *bodies*. At present therefore I shall only direct you to the duty of worshipping God in *prayer*, which is the part performed by the soul. The soul addresses itself to God, and the mind raises itself towards heaven by *PRAYER* ; which receives different names *Prayer, its parts.* according to those various subjects the mind is employed about in such addresses. When we bewail our particular sins with sorrow, and full purposes of amendment, it is called *confession* ; when we implore God's mercy, and desire any favour from him, *petition* ; when for the averting any evil, *deprecation* or *supplication* ; when we express a grateful sense of benefits received, *thanksgiving* ; when we beg any thing

thing for others, it is stiled *intercession*; when we acknowledge and adore the divine perfections, *praise*. So that in all these acts we have the great honour to be admitted into God's presence, and to treat with him about those things which chiefly concern our own happiness, or that of our neighbour. But

In the *first* place, let us compose our spirits, and gather in our thoughts from the mazes of the world; and then *Adoration.* begin our prayers with solemnly addressing ourselves to that Lord God almighty, with whom we have to do; declaring, both by our inward composure and outward behaviour, our full belief of his presence, and an holy awe and reverence of his majesty, and an entire reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ alone, for acceptance of our imperfect prayers before God the Father.

Confession. Having thus given glory to God, we must humbly *confess* our sins committed in thought, word, or deed, and earnestly request pardon for all our sins of omission and ignorance. Thus confession is either a general or a more particular acknowledging our sins before God; the former of which is a necessary part of all our publick prayers, the latter is most proper in our private prayers only. Not thereby that we can inform God of what he does not know, but in a true sense of our own simplicity, corruption, and wretchedness, so humble ourselves before the throne of his grace, and own ourselves liable to what punishment his justice shall condemn us. But above all, we must be most heartily thankful to God the Father, for his patience and long-suffering towards us, and for his readiness to be reconciled to us through Jesus Christ his only Son, concluding always with humble professions of sorrow and shame for sin, and firm resolutions of amendment; resolving, through the assistance of divine grace, that we will be better, and do better for the time to come.

Petition. The *next* part of prayer is that commonly called *petition*; or the intreating of God to grant unto us all those things that are needful both for our souls and bodies: For our souls, as our sins are what we ought to be most afraid of, let our confessions be always attended with petitions for pardon and forgiveness, through the merits of Christ Jesus; that he will grant us his favour, blessing, and gracious acceptance; that he will please to grant us a comfortable sense of his pardon to us; and that we may abound in righteousness, hope, quietness, and assurance, for ever, thro' the power of the Holy Ghost; that God will please to strengthen us with his grace against every evil thought, word, and deed, and all the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil; directing our consciences, shewing us the way of our duty, and making us wise and humble christians; and that he will plant in us all holy principles and dispositions,

dispositions, and increase every grace in our hearts, as faith, fear, love, charity, self-denial, humility, meekness, patience, contentment, and hope in God and Christ, but especially those graces which we are most in want of; and a hope of eternal life, prepared for such as love God, and keep his commandments; and that he will make us prudent and discreet, honest and sincere, active and diligent, resolute and courageous, pleasant and chearful, and universally conscientious in every event of providence, every condition of life, and in every relation wherein we stand towards God or our neighbour: that he will make us wiser and better every day than other: and that he will please to prepare us for an happy death, that we may at length enjoy the mansions of eternal happiness. And

The kingdom of God and his righteousness be. *For our bodies.* ing thus petitioned or sought for, we may have

the boldness to beg that all other things, the necessities, the comforts, and supports of this world may be added unto us: that we may enjoy the good things of this life, as well as be preserved from the calamities to which we are constantly subject. And let all our petitions conclude with this humbleness of heart; Lord, thou hast given us many and exceeding great and precious promises, which are all certain in Christ, therefore, be it now unto thy servant according to thy word.

The *third* part of prayer is *deprecation*; which *Deprecation.* is a praying to God, that he will turn away from us some evil either of sin or punishment. We are to pray against the evil of sin, especially when we are in most danger of falling into it; and against the evil *Of sin.* both of spiritual and temporal punishment; with this caution, to be earnest in our prayers, that God would not be angry with us, nor withdraw his grace, nor *Of punishment.* punish us with eternal damnation. But in temporal afflictions we must always pray with resignation to his divine will, according to the example of our blessed Saviour; who, when under the greatest afflictions, said, Not *my* will, but *thine* be done.

A *fourth* part of prayer is *intercession* or pray- *Intercession.* ing for others; therefore the apostle appoints us to make supplications for all saints; that all men may be saved by the knowledge of the truth; that he will convince and convert all atheists, deists, infidels, and all others, who are out of the way of truth, scoff at his word and ordinances, and disgrace christianity by their vice and immorality; that he will not forsake nor forget our nation in time of publick dangers and distress; that he will continue among us the gospel in its purity, and the means of grace according to his own holy ordinance; that he will continue our outward peace and tranquillity, liberty and plenty, prosper our trade, and bless the fruits of the earth for our use; that he will protect and preserve all those to whom

we bear any relation, as our king, all his royal family, our parents, husbands, wives, children, friends, benefactors, &c. That he will teach our senators wisdom, and give his spirit of wisdom, understanding, and justice, to all that are employed in publick affairs, or are appointed to execute justice, or to instruct others in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ: that he will bless all sorts and conditions of men, whether young or old; setting out in the world, or in long possession thereof; whether rich or poor; those that are prosperous in this world, or such as are under afflictions; those that hate, as well as those that love us.

*Praise and
thanksgiving.*

In the *last* place we must also gratefully acknowledge his goodness towards us; which acknowledgment, though it can add nothing to his glory, he is pleased to accept of, and reckons himself glorified by it, if it comes from an heart that is humbly sensible of its own unworthiness to receive any favour from him; and values the gifts, and loves the giver of them all. We must thank him for all his mercies both spiritual and temporal to us and all mankind in general, for all his goodness and loving kindness to us and to all men; and in particular for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings we have received at his hands; but above all, for his inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and the hopes of glory in the world to come.

II. Having thus given you the several parts of prayer; the next thing to be considered is WHERE we ought to pray: and here it will be found our duty to pray both in *publick* and *private*.

Publick prayers in the church.

Those prayers are most acceptable to God, and most necessary for us, which are offered in *publick assemblies*, because they have these advantages above private devotions, that God is most honoured and glorified by such addresses: and a sense of his majesty is maintained in the world, somewhat suitable to his most excellent greatness and goodness, when by outward signs and tokens we publish and declare the inward regard and esteem we have for his divine attributes: our Saviour promises his special presence to such assemblies, and hath appointed a particular order of men to offer up our prayers in such places of worship. Besides, we may expect greater success, when our petitions are made with the joint and unanimous consent of our fellow-christians, and when our devotions receive warmth and heat from the exemplary zeal of pious ministers. These considerations should make all good christians frequently attend the publick worship in the house of God. Therefore, it is to be wished, That they who have opportunities, and are not lawfully hindered, would endeavour so to regulate their time, as to be able constantly to attend on prayer at church; for as those who have leisure cannot

cannot better employ it, so they must have but little concern for the honour and glory of God, who neglect such opportunities of declaring and publishing his praise before men.

The next christian duty is *family prayer*. E- *In the family.* very master of a family is answerable to God for the welfare of those souls that are under his care. Nor can I well understand how a sense of religion can be maintained in a family without the exercise of daily devotion in it. By this method we are best able to confirm and establish children and servants in the practice of their christian obligations; and this is an admirable means to draw down the blessings of God, when in a body they daily acknowledge his divine perfections, and supplicate his favour for the mercies they want. This devotion must be also remembered at our meals; for we *At meals.*

ought to beg the blessing of God upon those good creatures provided for our use; since it is by the word of God and prayer that they are sanctified to us. Natural religion itself teaches us thankfully to acknowledge the benefits we receive; and this particular instance of it hath sufficient ground from the example of Christ and his holy apostles, all the Evangelists declaring, that our Saviour blessed and gave thanks before meat; the same St. Luke relates of St. Paul; and even St. Paul himself speaks of it, as the known practice of the church among christians in his time.

III. But this performance of publick prayer *Private prayers* can by no means excuse a man from the other duty of *private prayer*, which is that praying to our Father in secret, commanded by our Saviour; and to which in particular he has promised a reward. And when a man does thus approach to God in private, he ought to be more particular according to his pressing necessities, than it may be convenient for him to express himself in publick. Besides, it is much to be feared, that those who frequently attend on publick prayers, and yet neglect their private devotions, rather seek the praise of men, than to approve themselves to God. This duty God hath established as a means, whereby we are to obtain whatever we want in relation to our souls and bodies; we are to ask before it shall be given, we must seek before we shall find, we must knock before it will be opened unto us. And he hath promised the assistance of his Holy Spirit to help us in the performance of our prayers; and hath appointed his Son to intercede by virtue of his merits for their admission. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we should live in the *constant* exercise of *Frequency in prayer.* prayer; and in so doing we cannot fail of attaining the end we aim at, our soul's salvation. None can be virtuous that live without praying. Let people boast never so much of the great effects of a good resolution, they must at last confess that there is no getting such a victory over their lusts and corruptions, no living such a christian life, as the gospel requires

of us, without the practice of earnest and ardent prayer to God and a constant attendance to reading and meditation, and other such like devout exercises. Though we have formed our purposes, as we think, never so strongly, and doubt not but that we shall be able to resist every temptation; yet if we do not daily apply ourselves to the throne of grace, for strength and influence and support, there can be little hopes that we shall make any progress or advancement in christianity; but, on the contrary, it is much to be feared that such a neglect will bring us insensibly into a state of carelessness and indifferency to these matters, if not entirely to a worldly, sensual, or vicious life.

It's necessity.

Where let it be remarked, Our whole duty is made up but of *three* things; that a man live *soberly*, with respect to himself; *righteously*, with respect to his neighbour; and *piously*, with respect to God. Supposing now, that a man take care of doing his duty to himself and his neighbour; yet, if he makes no conscience of piety towards God, in what sense can this man be said to have done his duty, or to live virtuously? truly in no sense. Because, as to one third part of his duty, he is a notorious offender. For, though he be not unjust, though he be not debauched, yet wanting piety towards God, he is impious; and this will as certainly damn him, as either of the other sins. Therefore, either one of these two things must be made appear, that is to say, that there may be such virtue, as will recommend us to God without piety; or that there may be piety, without ever praying to or worshipping God: neither of which I believe was ever imagined; or, it will follow, that where there be no praying, there is no virtue, and consequently no salvation for such as neglect that duty. Devotion is as necessary a means to preserve the union between the soul and God, in which our spiritual life consists, as meat and drink is, to preserve the union between our souls and bodies, by which our natural life is supported. So we may every whit as reasonably expect to keep our bodies alive, without the constant and daily use of eating and drinking, as we can expect to keep our souls alive to God, without the constant and daily exercise of prayer. But as to the proper

When to be used.

time in which this duty ought to be more particularly performed, that must be regulated according to the leisure every one can find from the duty of his necessary business or calling; yet this duty must never be neglected in morning and evening; and we may all lift up our hearts to God in some pious ejaculation in every work throughout the whole day.

The advantages of prayer.

Such as make a conscience of saying their prayers frequently and heartily, and continue so to do though they be not good at the present, yet it is impossible for them long to continue in bad habits; they will at last certainly get the victory over all their lusts and attain to the favour of God, and their own salvation.

the benefits and advantages that do accrue to us from it are innumerable. It is the most proper means to ennoble and refine, and spiritualize our natures in the *Honour.*

new birth. If our daily converse with material objects was not balanced by prayer, it would make us wholly sensual, and flesh would destroy the works of the spirit; the constant exercise of prayer is the best method to get the mastery of our evil inclinations, and to overcome our vicious customs. By this we preserve a lively sense of our duty upon our minds, and are fortified a-

gainst many temptations that continually assault our souls and bodies: By this our souls are *The benefits of prayer.* raised above this world, and spiritual objects are

made familiar to us; by this our affections are sanctified, and we are supported under the calamities and crosses of this life: And by this we are led gradually to the perfection of christian piety, and preserved in a strict union between God and our souls, in which consists our spiritual life. In fine, without this we in vain pretend to discharge those duties that are incumbent upon us as christians, or to prosper in our temporal affairs, which must have God's blessing to crown them with advantage to us. Prayer secures the blessing of God, both upon our persons and upon our labours; upon our basket and store; upon our families; upon our employments; and upon all that we do, have, or desire: it turns all the actions of our natural or civil life, however indifferent they be, into actions of religious worship. By that every thing that we have, or comes to us, is thereby made a blessing of God, which without it, perhaps, might have been an affliction and cross. Prayer is that by which every thing and every action is sanctified to believers.

This duty requires no labour; the feeblest and *Its ease.* most dispirited body that can but lift up eyes to heaven, and direct wishes thither, doth it as effectually as the most vigorous. This duty doth not go against the grain of any natural inclination; nor put the body to any pain or inconvenience. This duty puts us to no charge or expence in the world, save that of our thoughts, which are hereby fixed on things in heaven. This duty in no wise consumes our time, for we may attend this work, when we are doing the business of our calling. So that there is no objection against it; it is one of the most easy, natural, and inoffensive duties that God enjoins his creatures.

Besides, it is the most pleasant and delightful ex- *Pleasantness.*ercise of all the pleasures of the soul. We may talk of pleasures and enjoyments, but no man ever truly found them, till he became acquainted with God, and was made sensible of his love, and partaker of his spiritual favours, and lived in an entire friendship and communion with him; which is chiefly, if not only, both expressed and maintained by prayer and other exercises of a devout and spiritual life. There can be therefore no bet-

Carnality and want of use the reasons of its seeming otherwise.

ter reason assigned for the great neglect of this duty, than either a lustful heart, which confines its desires and hopes within the narrow bounds of carnal pleasures, and the dross of a perishable world; Or, to a want of use thereof: for there are many things which seem uneasy at the first trial, which upon custom become delightful. Yet,

IV. Let our prayers be never so frequent and fervent, they must be rightly qualified, and these *requisites* or *conditions* of prayer are, either such as concern the matter of our prayers, or the things we are to pray for; Or, such as concern the manner of our prayer, or the qualifications with which they are to be attended. And

To ask nothing unlawful. *First*, the things which we ask, must be such as are *lawful* or agreeable to the will of God.

Now whatsoever is not just, is not agreeable to the will of God, and consequently, ought not to be prayed for: as for example, to pray for revenge upon our enemies, to desire God to prosper us in our wicked courses, and the like; is not lawful. Again, things may be very just in themselves, but yet it will be very unjust in us to ask for them; namely, when we ask good things but to evil purposes; then we ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and why so? we ask, that we may consume them upon our lusts. Again, the matter of our prayers may be lawful in itself, and we may ask with honest and innocent designs, and yet the things we ask may not be according to God's will; because God perhaps sees they are not convenient for us, or he sees that some other things will better suit our circumstances of body or soul: This is the case of all those worldly blessings, commonly so called.

Secondly, We must ask in *faith*. This is a condition ordered by our Saviour to his apostles, All things (saith he) whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive: which implies no more than the praying with a hearty belief, both that God is able to grant the requests I put up to him, and that, for the sake of Jesus Christ, he will do it, supposing that it will be for his glory, and my good; and also supposing that I perform all the conditions that are required on my part towards the obtaining thereof: so that to pray in faith, is to pray to God with a full purpose of heart, (let what will come) to believe and to live like a christian, not to use any indirect means, or to depart from the sincerity of my christian profession, for the gaining even of the whole world. These conditions must be accompanied with constancy and perseverance.

With humility. *Thirdly*, Our prayer should be always offered up in an humble acknowledgment of our own unworthiness. For the proud, and those that are full of themselves, are the most unfit for prayer, and the most offensive to God.

God. When they make addressees to him in any manner, he resisteth them, he beholdeth them afar off, as the scripture expresseth it, with an eye of scorn : but he giveth grace to the humble ; nor will he despise the broken and contrite heart. We may put up our requests for any lawful thing, but then it must constantly be with this condition, if God sees it fit for us, and it be agreeable to the will of his divine majesty. Though we may peremptorily ask all spiritual blessings in particular, and be assured, if the other requisites of our prayer do concur, we shall obtain them : And, at all times, our great care should be to endeavour to dispossess all wandering thoughts at the time of devotion ; for this is drawing near to God with our lips, when our hearts are far from him ; and they that thus slight and despise the dreadful majesty of God they come before, will more likely bring a curse than a blessing upon themselves. But if this can't be perfectly done, let not a few interruptions damp a truly devout prayer : for, considering the frame and constitution of our natures and the close connection between soul and body, when we are at our prayers our thoughts may be diverted, and our intentions interrupted by the impressions of study or business of this world. Therefore, all we can do, is to watch and strive against these distractions, to bewail this weakness, and to compose our thoughts to all that seriousness our temper and circumstances will permit ; to recall our minds as soon as we perceive they run out upon other objects, and immediately to throw away all such thoughts as are foreign to our devotions, and to beg God's pardon and assistance ; remembering always, that what makes those distractions criminal, is when we willingly entertain them, and indulge ourselves in thinking upon other objects without restraint ; when we keep our unreasonable passions under no government, and take no care to compose ourselves into a serious temper, by considering in whose awful presence we appear, when at our devotions.

With attention.

Watchfulness.

Distractions when criminal.

22

Fourthly, Our hearts must be possessed with a deep sense of God's majesty, which is infinite and incomprehensible ; let it be deeply impressed upon our minds, that we pray to no less a person than the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, that was from everlasting, and is to everlasting, world without end. And then we ought more particularly, in order to the praying as we should do, to get our hearts possessed with a sense of his goodness. This is that which, above all other things, will put life and vigour into our prayers, will both stir us up to this duty, and support us in the performance thereof. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

With a sense of God's majesty.

And goodness.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, We must endeavour to get our minds seriously affected with a sense of *our manifold wants*: for otherwise, it is impossible we should heartily pray for redress and supply; therefore, if we desire to bring ourselves to a praying temper, we must often take an account of the state of our souls, and examine what necessities we have to be supplied, what sins to be pardoned, what evil affections to be mortified, what virtues and graces of the Holy Spirit to be attained for our strength and support.

Sixthly, All these conditions must be accompanied with great *zeal*. *fervour* and *constancy*; that is, we must in the most hearty, serious, and affectionate manner, put up our requests to God for his aid; and likewise in so doing, we must persevere to the end.

With purity. *Seventhly,* It is also required of us for the preparing and disposing us for the putting up our prayers as we should do, that we *purify* our hearts from all actual affection to sin; that we come not to God with any of our wickednesses about us, but that we do put them away from us, at least in purpose and desire. The necessity of this requisite is so great, that there is no praying where it is wanting. For, if I incline unto wickedness with my heart, the Lord will not hear me. We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a doer of his will, he will hear him. Therefore, till we can seriously resolve to quit our evil courses, to forsake every known, wilful, open sin, that we are conscious to ourselves we live in, let us not think ourselves prepared and qualified to put up our prayers to God, who will not be mocked.

Of bodily worship. *Lastly,* to all which requisites we must also add that *worship of the body*, which is particularly exhort ed by the royal Psalmist, where he says, O come let us worship and fall down and kneel before the Lord our maker; which necessarily implies, that the just and devout meaning of our souls should be expressed by suitable, humble, and reverend gestures of the body, in our approaches or prayers to God. And therefore the apostle, knowing that this also is a tribute due from the body of man to the Creator, commands us to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. vi. 20.

God must be the only object of our prayers. V. By this account we have given of prayer, it appears not only that it is a duty that we owe to God, but that it is a duty we owe to him *alone*, and that no being in the world besides himself hath a right to be prayed unto. Because, if prayer be one of the principal instances of that honour, and an expression of that dependence that we owe to the creator and governor of the world; then certainly to be prayed unto is, and for ever will be, one of the rights and prerogatives of his Sovereign Majesty, never to be

be given to any thing created. Consequently, to invoke, or pray to any creature in a religious way, though it be the highest creature in heaven, whether angel or saint, not excepting the blessed virgin herself, must needs be an affront done to God, as giving that honour to one of his creatures that is only proper to the Creator. And

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God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning? This is

Ans. I. a mere fallacy. God's hearkening to, or being moved by, the prayers we put to him, doth not in the least clash with his unchangeable decrees. We grant, when God is pleased to give us those things, which without our prayers he would not have done, there is a change in him or us; but not in God, for God resolved, that if we humbly and heartily beg such or such things at his hands, we should have them; but, if not, we should go without what we want. Therefore, when upon our prayers we obtain that grace, or that blessing, which we had not before, it is not he that is changed, but we. We, by performing the conditions he required of us, looking with another aspect to him, do entitle ourselves to quite different treatment from him, than we could claim before we were changed from our wicked course of life, by making ourselves capable of receiving those benefits, which before we were not capable of.

Obj. II. When this objection has failed, then they rest upon GOD's *infinite* and *essential* goodness. We grant that the goodness of God is infinite, and that he governs

Ans. II. the world in the best way that is possible, and consequently, he always will do that which is best, let us behave ourselves never so badly. Yet doth it from hence follow, that we shall have all such things as we stand in need of, without praying for them? No: Because the same God that will do always what is absolutely best for his creatures, knows that it is best for them, that in order to the partaking of his benefits, they should pray for them; if they do not, why then he knows it is best that they should be denied such things. Whence the necessity of God's acting for the best, doth not in the least destroy the necessity of prayer in order to our obtaining what we stand in need of. God will do always that which is best; but we are mistaken if we think it for the best, that we should have our necessities supplied without the use of prayer; because it is the means appointed by God to obtain it.

Repentance. VI. To prayer it is necessary to subjoin the duty of REPENTANCE; a duty which the apostle St. Paul particularly testifies to be due to God; because all sin being forbidden of God, we never transgress his commands, whether in regard to our neighbour or ourselves, but we incur his displeasure; and must dread his justice, except we repent.

Is a turning from sin to God. This repentance is an entire change of heart and mind, which produces the like change in our lives and conversations; so that to repent of our sins, is to be convinced that we have done amiss: whence follows hearty sorrow for having foolishly neglected the most important concern of our life, and done what in us lies to make ourselves everlastingly miserable; that we have been

ungrateful

ungrateful to our mighty Benefactor, and unfaithful to our best friend ; that we have affronted heaven with those very blessings we have received from thence ; and that we have despised the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, which should have led us to a thorough change of our life and conversation. And this sorrow for our sins must be expressed, by humbly confessing them to Almighty God, with shame and confusion of face, by an utter abhorrence, and detestation of them, by being heartily troubled for what we have done amiss, and resolving not to do the like any more ; and by testifying the reality of our inward sorrow, by all those ways that we find naturally occur in other cases that afflict us, as in fasting, weeping, mourning, and praying ; it being very fit, that, as the soul and body have been partakers in the same sins, so they should join together in the same humiliation and firm resolution of amendment. But

All sorrow for sin, and all purposes of amendment for the time to come, are not in all cases *Whence arising.* sufficient to be properly called repentance, or an hearty *contrition* : because, if this sorrow and purpose of amendment arise not from a pure love of God, and deep sense of our own foul ingratitude in offending so good and gracious a being, but only from a dread of his justice, and fear of being punished for transgressions ; our repentance and good purposes, though they carry with them the appearance of never so much truth and reality, ought justly to be suspected as insufficient. Which duty therefore does not only from hence appear to be necessary, but it is strongly enforced, even with the force of a command, when our Saviour declares, that except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke xiii. 5.

The best method to make such a resolution of *When effectual.* amendment *effectual*, is to extend it to all the particulars of our duty, obliging ourselves to have a respect to all God's commands, and to avoid every thing his law condemns. Thus true repentance must be *pure, constant, and persevering* in its effects ; that is, it *Must be pure, constant and persevering.* must put a man into such a state as that he will not any more return wilfully unto sin. He therefore that repents, ought to be infinitely fearful of relapsing into sin, as one that is recovering out of a dangerous and almost mortal sickness. Whenever he wilfully relapses, he makes his case worse than it was at first, and his disease more in danger of being mortal ; it becomes much harder for him to renew himself unto repentance, and much more difficult to procure pardon : It is true, evil habits are not to be rooted out at once, and vicious customs to be overcome in a moment. So long therefore as a man does not return wilfully and deliberately into the habit of sin, many surprises and interruptions in the struggle with a

customary vice may be consistent with the progress of repentance: but it is then only that it becomes complete and effectual, when the evil habit is so entirely rooted out, that the man thence-forward obeys the commandments of God without looking back, and returns no more to the sins he has condemned. Let no man therefore think that he has truly repented of any deadly sin, so long as he continues to practise and repeat it. He may fast, and pray, and lament, and use all the apparent signs of repentance imaginable; but God will never esteem his repentance true, nor accept it as available to the forgiveness of sin, till he sees it pure, and constant, and persevering.

Must not be delayed.

It is mere delusion and an unpardonable stupidity for man, who has not the power of his own life, and should he be cut off in the midst of his sins, must be eternally punished, to delay this great and necessary work for the present, and defer it to some future opportunity; either till the heat of youth is over, or till sickness, old age, or death overtakes him. And it is not only the greatest folly imaginable, to venture a matter of such consequence upon such an uncertainty as future time, which we can never be sure of; and to defer a necessary work to the most unfitting season of performing it; but it is highly wicked, in that we abuse God's patience, who gives us time and opportunity for it at present, and prefer the slavery of sin before his service; it is a contempt of his laws, and of that wrath which is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness: so that we may justly fear that such a proceeding may provoke God to withdraw that grace, which will then be necessary for the exercise of our repentance, though he should give us time and opportunity for so great a work.

Times for this duty.

Daily.

From whence we may conclude concerning the times and frequent returns of our repentance: If we are daily guilty of any sin, we should repent every day; because sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. We may be instructed in this custom by the children of this world in the management of their temporal concerns: they teach us, that short reckonings are the safest means to a fair and unperplexed account.

On solemn occasions.

In afflictions.

At death.

We should repent before all solemn days, the blessed sacrament, &c. The time of affliction is a strong call to repentance; when sickness, or pains, or outward calamities, or a wounded spirit, attack us, we are soon sensible of our own inability; And whither should we fly for refuge? Break off thy sins by repentance, says Daniel; lest we be punished with those who despise the chastisements of the Lord. The approach of death is the most awakening season for repentance; and I fear most men's repentance sets sail from this dangerous port. Not that we pretend to set bounds to the goodness

and mercy of that Lord, who declares that he wills not the death of a sinner: and, whenever a soul is raised from the sleep of sin, it must be ascribed unto the Spirit of God calling her to repentance; consequently it would be rash and dangerous for us to assert the impossibility of a death-bed repentance. Yet, it is certain, that without a particular grace of God no man will be able to repent upon his *death-bed*; and it is no ways reasonable to expect these extraordinary influences, when the ordinary means

*The danger of
deferring it
till then.*

of grace have been neglected all the life long. He who long pursues a vicious course, and returns not till the latter end of his days, must never expect either to live or die in so great peace, or so assured a prospect of being happy in the other world, though he be never so diligent and sincere in his religion, as he who begins betimes. All his hopes will be mingled with sad fears of his condition; the sense of the many grievous sins of his life so long persisted in will still be afflicting his conscience, and he will still be doubtful whether he hath sufficiently repented of them, and whether God hath received him to favour. This is the unavoidable consequence of putting off the business of religion till our latter days. Wherefore

It is to be feared, and it is highly probable, that whoever defers it till that time, will never repent. *The disadvantage of a death-bed repentance.* All; or if he does, his penitential resolutions being founded upon such temporary principles as the fear of death, and the absence of temptation, they will seldom prove strong and vigorous enough to produce a thorough reformation; as is plain in the case of those that recover, among whom there are very few that are true and constant to those purposes of amendment, which they formed upon the prospect of approaching death. Therefore make no delay in this great and necessary work: For,

Length of time will add strength to thy evil *Custom of sin.* inclinations, and weaken thy good resolutions. Can the man who has cherished sin all his life in his bosom, and wilfully neglected, if not abhorred, God and his means of grace, ever hope to be so thoroughly changed in a moment, as effectually to hate sin, and turn unto the God of his salvation with all his heart?

Or again; What hopes can a man entertain *Bodily pain.* that he shall find time and opportunity for this necessary duty, when the little remains of life are filled up with continual distractions and afflictions, which are the necessary effects of those diseases which commonly bring us to the grave?

To this duty of repentance we commonly find *Fasting.* the duty of FASTING joined in scripture; and we therefore shall act most prudently and safely to conform to that rule. Fasting, in a strict sense, implies a total abstinence

from all meat and drink the whole day, from morning to evening ; and then to refresh ourselves sparingly as to the quantity, and not delicately as to the quality, of the nourishment. But in a large sense, fasting implies an abstinence from some kind of food, especially flesh and wine, or a deferring eating beyond the usual hours, as the primitive christians did on their set days, till three in the afternoon, to which hour on those days their public assemblies continued. By this mortification

A revenge upon ourselves.

some *self-denial* is designed to our bodily appetites ; for no abstinence can partake of the nature of fasting, except there be something in it that afflicts us ; and nature seems to suggest it as a proper means to express sorrow and grief ; and as a fit method to dispose our minds towards the consideration of any thing that is serious. And therefore all nations from ancient times have used fasting as a part of repentance, and as a means to turn away God's anger ; as it is plain in the case of the Ninevites, which was a notion common to them with the rest of mankind. And although our Saviour hath left no positive precept about fasting, yet he joins it with almsgiving and prayer, unquestionable duties : and the directions he gave in his admirable sermon upon the mount, concerning the performance of it, sufficiently supposes the necessity of the duty ; which if governed by such rules as our Saviour there lays down, will be accepted by God, and openly rewarded by him when he judges us according to our works.

At what times observed by the antient christians.

Therefore the antient christians were very exact both in their weekly and yearly fasts : their weekly fasts were kept on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* ; because on the one our Lord was betrayed, and on the other crucified for our sins. But no fast

When acceptable to God ; yet so satisfaction for sin.

may be accounted religious, but such as is undertaken to restrain the looser appetites of the flesh, and to keep the body under subjection ; to give the mind liberty and ability to consider and reflect while it is actually engaged in divine service, or preparing for some solemn part of it ; to humble ourselves before God under a due sense of our sins, and the misery to which they expose us ; to turn away his anger, and to supplicate for his mercy and favour ; to express revenge against ourselves, for the abuse of those good things God alloweth us to enjoy, and of which we have made ourselves unworthy by sinful excesses, when it is used as a piece of self-denial, in order the better to command our fleshly appetites ; and as a means to raise in our minds a due valuation of the happiness of the other world, when we despise the enjoyments of this : and, above all, to make it acceptable to God, it should be accompanied with fervent prayer, and a charitable relief of the poor, whose miseries we may the better guess at, when we are bearing some of the inconveniencies

niencies of hunger ; always taking care to avoid all presumption, never to fall under a supposition that we merit thereby, nor in such an extreme manner as may prejudice our health, and indispose us for the service of God.

THE SECOND PART

OF THE NEW

Whole Duty of Man :

CONTAINING

Our Duty towards our NEIGHBOUR.

SUNDAY VIII.

I. *Of the duties to our NEIGHBOUR ; viz. of the duty of the subjects to their prince : II. Of the prince to the subjects. III. Of the duty to civil magistrates ; and of their duty both to their sovereign and to the people. IV. Of the duty to pastors, and of their superior education ; king's supremacy, &c. V. Of the duty of children to their natural parents ; to reverence, to love, and to obey them in all lawful commands, and in respect of marriage ; and VI. Of going to law with parents. VII. Of the duty of parents to children ; to instruct them, to put them to business, and to provide for them in the best manner they are able. And VIII. In what cases they may disinherit them.*

I. **H**AVING gone through the duties of the *Our duty to* FIRST TABLE, the order in which the *our neighbour.* commandments stand, leads us now to survey our duty to our NEIGHBOUR. And it is observable, comparatively speaking, that the importance of every duty, and the malignity of every breach of our duty, stand higher in the catalogue of virtues and vices, according to their rank and priority, in the ten commandments. Thus the sins of disbelieving God, or worshipping idols, condemned in the first and second precepts, are more heinous crimes than taking God's name in vain, and breaking the sabbath. Thus the sins against heaven, prohibited in the first table, or the first four commandments, are more heinous provocations than the transgressions committed against man, in the six last. Again, thus the duties we owe to societies, or the relative

duties, are fastened upon us by stronger ties than those we owe to single persons, by reason of the extensiveness of their influence and the general good. And we must at sight allow, that murder is more criminal than adultery, adultery more criminal than theft, theft more criminal than slander, and slander worse than coveting. From this reasoning we chuse to assign the first rank to the *fifth commandment*, when we treat of the *duties* of the SECOND TABLE; tho' the author of the *Old Whole Duty of Man* has not followed this most natural and scriptural Method. And

Duty to the king.

As the order of the commandments, the dictates of nature, and the ordinance of God, has placed the *parental* authority at the head of the *second table*, as containing the primary, social and christian duties, being most prevalent upon peace and piety, and consisting chiefly of the civil, spiritual, and natural parents: so I intend, *first*, to treat of the relative duties between the *civil parent* or *prince* and *people*; because we are commanded to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the *king*, as supreme; or unto *governors*, as unto them that are sent by him. In particular kingdoms, the king is the fountain of authority, from whence all power descends upon lower magistrates; so in the universal monarchy of the world, God is the fountain of all power and dominion, from whom all authority and right of government descends upon princes. Therefore, seeing that sovereigns are God's vicegerents, and do reign by his authority, they have also a right to be

Honour.

honoured and revered by their subjects, because they bear God's character, and do shine with the rays of his majesty; and consequently, it is an affront to God's own majesty, for subjects to contemn and vilify their sovereigns, to expose their faults, and uncover their nakedness, and lampoon and libel their persons and actions; therefore never speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

Assistance.

And since sovereigns are ordained by God for the common good, to protect the innocent and avenge the injured, and guard the rights of their people against foreign and domestick fraud and violence; they must hereupon

In paying taxes or tribute.

have an undoubted right to be *aided* and *assisted* by their subjects; because without their aid it will be impossible for them to accomplish the ends of their sovereignty: and therefore, for subjects to refuse to aid their sovereign with their *purses*, or *persons*, when legally required; or by any indirect means to withdraw themselves from his assistance, whenever his and the country's real necessities call for it, is to detain from him a just right that is owing to his character. For, for this cause pay you *tribute* also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore

therefore to all their dues: *tribute* to whom tribute is due, *custom* to whom custom, *fear* to whom fear, *honour* to whom honour. And to this the apostle subjoins the tribute of our *prayers*. I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. And moreover,

They have a right to be obeyed in all things, *Obedience*. wherein they do not interfere with the commands of God; for in obeying them we obey God, who commands by their mouths, and wills by their laws and proclamations: and as he who refuses to obey the inferior magistrate's command, doth in so doing disobey the king himself, unless he commands the contrary; so he who disobeys his sovereign, who is God's magistrate, doth, in so doing, disobey God, unless it be where God hath commanded him to the contrary. While he commands lawful things he hath a right to be obeyed, because his commands are stamped with divine authority, and are thereby rendered sacred, never to be violated.

II. These are duties implied in the station of a *Duty of princes*. *sovereign*, and there are others implied in the station of a *subject*: for, sovereign power being ordained by God, for a publick good, to guard and defend the innocent, to shelter and relieve the oppressed, to fence and propagate true religion, adjust and balance private rights and interests; every subject hath a right to be protected thereby, so far as can be, in his person and legal rights, in his just liberties and privileges, and sincere profession of the true religion; and that sovereign, who doth not employ his power to these purposes, but through wilful and affected error, or ignorance, imposes a false religion on his people; or betrays, oppresses, or enslaves them himself, or permits others so to do, either out of malice or carelessness, is an injurious invader of the rights and properties of his people; and shall one day answer for it at the tribunal of God, who is the King of kings. *To protect their subjects.*

III. In like manner, there is a relation of *judges* and *justices*, *governors* of towns, cities, and provinces, and such like *inferior* magistrates, who by virtue of that authority, which is stamped upon them, have a right to be honoured, and revered, and obeyed by the people, according to the degree and extent of their authority and power: because, wherever it is placed, authority is a sacred thing, as being a ray and image of the divine majesty, and as such may justly claim honour and reverence from all men; and whoever contemns the lowest degree of it, offers an affront to the

the highest; for he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. Whosoever contemns the inferior magistrates, who are vested with the king's authority, doth therein contemn the king. Therefore, we are not to evade our obedience, under any pretence of the unworthiness or personal faults and defects of the magistrates in commission; but, men ought to consider that their authority is a sacred thing, and, as such, challenges their reverence and obedience by a right that cannot be dispensed with; and that therefore, to behave themselves forwardly, stubbornly, or irreverently towards a lawful magistrate, is to detain from him his due, and offer an unjust affront to his character; and consequently, let a man be never so good in other instances, such a rebellious behaviour will bespeak him highly dishonest and injurious in the sight of God. And

Their duty. As you have seen the relation of inferior magistrates entitles them to the people's reverence and obedience; the relation, which the prince and people bear to them, entitles them both to their fidelity, vigilance, and justice

To the king. also; because inferior magistrates are the king's trustees for himself and his people; and in their hands he deposes the honour, security, and rights of his own crown and dominion, together with the safeguard and protection of the just and legal rights of his people: so that upon their acceptance of this trust, by which they engage themselves faithfully to discharge it, the king acquires a right to their faithful and vigilant care, to see that his authority be revered, his

To the people. laws obeyed, his person, government, and properties secured; and the people acquire a right to be protected by them in their persons, reputations, liberties, and estates: Besides, they should command without insulting, reprove with meekness, punish unwillingly, and never without manifest tokens of tenderness and compassion. Consequently,

So far as they are wilfully failing, either towards the king or the people, in any of these matters, they do unjustly detain the king's or the people's rights, or both; they betray the trust committed to them, falsify their own engagements, and under the mask of authority are publick robbers of mankind, and may and ought to be punished as such by those laws they have violated.

How to be punished. IV. A second distinguished branch of the parental authority, where the duties are mutual and reciprocal, is that of *spiritual parents* or *pastors*.

Duties to our pastors and people. These spiritual parents discharge the like good offices to our souls, which our natural parents do to our bodies: therefore we proceed to inquire into the duty of the people to their *ministers*. The christians of the first ages

Honour and esteem. always expressed a mighty value and esteem for their clergy; because they were sensible there could

could be no church without priests, and that it was by their means that God conveyed to them all those mighty blessings which were purchased by the death of Christ. Upon this account also should be founded our *love* of them; *Love.*

forasmuch as we are taught so to do by the apostle, who said to the Thessalonians, And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to *esteem* them very highly *in love* for their works sake. If then we

are taught to *honour* and *esteem* our spiritual governors for their works sake, we must treat them with *respect*, considering them as those that bear the great character of ambassadors from Christ, as St. Paul *Respect and reverence.* 1122

calls them; and as instruments of conveying to us the greatest blessings we are capable of receiving, because they relate to our eternal salvation; and consequently, regarding them as commissioned by him to that holy function: wherefore the authority they have received to preside over christians, as governors of the church, must always be owned to come from God; and this religious regard to their divine mission must be expressed in the whole course of our conduct towards their persons. We must respect and reverence them by our words and actions, expressing all the honour and esteem we have for their character, treating their persons with great civility in conversation; speaking all the good we can of them in their absence, and throwing a veil over their infirmities; never making them the objects of our light mirth, nor proclaiming their failings in order to reproach their persons, because it may tend to debase their ministry; not using any scurrilous words, or contemptuous behaviour towards them; because the disrespect cast upon them is an affront to their Master, whose person they represent: according to what our Saviour told his disciples when he sent them out to preach the gospel: He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

Nor did people of ancient times rest in this outward behaviour; for they gave all imaginable proof of a sincere and hearty love and esteem for their persons, by *maintaining* them liberally out of their shipwrecked fortunes, and cheerfully *submitting* to the severe discipline enjoined by them, from a sense of that authority ministers have received from Christ, the great Bishop of souls; and in pursuance to those precepts which our Saviour and St. Paul have left us for that purpose. So we must also *obey* our spiritual governors, not only in whatsoever they *Maintenance.*

out of scripture declare to us to be God's commands, either by publick preaching, or by private exhortations; because they are the messengers of the Lord of hosts, so long as their doctrines are agreeable to the word of God; but likewise in submitting *Obedience.*

to that discipline they shall inflict, either to recover us from a state of folly, or to preserve us from falling into such a state; from a pure sense of that right they have to command, entrusted to them by our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of that great penalty we are liable to by our contempt: for he that despiseth them, despiseth him that sent them. We are accordingly charged to obey them that have the rule over us, and to submit ourselves, because they watch for our souls, as they that must give an account.

Prayers for them,

And though it may be we are deprived of other opportunities of doing them any substantial service; yet it is in the power of the meanest of us all to pray for or to address heaven in their behalf; that they may be defended from the malice and ill-will of bad men; that they may have the countenance and protection of the great and powerful; that their zealous labours in God's vineyard may be attended with success, and that they may turn many to righteousness, according to the gospel of Christ.

The priesthood is honourable.

From whence we learn, that it is no diminution to greatness of birth, or any personal excellency, to be devoted to the ministration of God's holy word and sacraments. We speak here particularly of the christian priesthood, whose priests are called the ministers of Christ, stewards of the mysteries of God, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation, the glory of Christ, ambassadors for Christ, in Christ's stead, co-workers with him, angels of the churches. Because they act by commission from him, they are his officers and immediate attendants, and in a particular manner the servants of his house. They are employed in his particular business, impowered and authorized to negotiate and transact for God in all the outward administrations of the covenant of grace, or of reconciliation, between God and man, by commission from Jesus Christ.

Why ordained.

Thus under the gospel they are instituted to dispense spiritual food for the nourishment of christians, to feed them with God's holy word and sacraments, to speak the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world; which is committed to their care, to be preserved intire from being maimed or perverted, as the sacraments are to be rightly and duly administered to his people. For which end and purpose they were ordained by Christ himself, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, who glorified not himself to be an high-priest; but had his commission from God the Father, and after his resurrection invested his apostles with the same commission his Father had given him before; which evidently contains an authority of ordaining others, and a power of transferring that commission upon others so long as the world endures. Wherefore, without his expresse commission, no man ought to take upon himself, or communicate to others, a power to sign and seal covenants in the name of Christ.

The apostles and their successors exercised this commission in all places, and even in opposition to the rulers that then were; so that the church subsisted as a distinct society from the state till the fourth century. Whence we infer, that a man may have exceeding good parts, and a great talent in speaking; he may have likewise attained a considerable skill in the scriptures and other sorts of learning, and have all the other qualifications which are needful to make him a very useful minister of the church: But still this alone, without a lawful call, doth not empower him to take that office upon him. If a man do not come in this way, he is not a lawful shepherd, but an intruder into Christ's flock, whatever natural or acquired abilities he may have to fit him for the employment. And great purity of life is required of those that are invested with such an honourable character, whereby they may in some measure be qualified to administer in holy things, and by their example guide those they instruct by their doctrine, which is of Christ; and it is an argument of a prophane temper to contemn those who are commissioned by God himself to that sacred office.

What is required of them who take orders.

For, though they may be inferior to others in some human accomplishments; yet God hath promised particularly to assist them in the faithful discharge of their holy office, and has blessed them with many personal qualifications to challenge our esteem and respect. For, as long as piety and virtue, learning and knowledge, have any credit and reputation in the world, and men are concerned that others should be formed to the same valuable principles, that their minds should be cultivated, and their manners regulated; so long the clergy will have a good title to the honour and esteem of all those that are truly wise and good. Did we only consider the method of their education, we shall find it would give them

Are assigned by God.

Of superior education.

great advantages for their improvement in all sorts of necessary and polite learning, and raise them above the level of those with whom they are equal in other circumstances; and the subject of their constant studies being matters of piety and religion, it is reasonable to suppose they live under more lively and stronger impressions of the other world than the rest of mankind; and experience sufficiently convinces us how much the nobility and gentry of the kingdom are beholden to their care for those impressions of piety and knowledge which are stamped upon their education, and diffused into their families. For, even in the most ignorant ages, what learning flourished was in their body, and by their care was conveyed down to us. They have been in the most distant times the greatest examples of piety, and we have yet remaining

Their great service to men.

maintaining eminent monuments of their magnificent as well as useful charities.*

*Must not be
contemned.*

And should it happen that the ministers of God may not act suitably to the dignity of their character, yet we must not condemn them: for, their character should certainly defend them from contempt, and the relation they have to God should secure 'em from ill treatment; in order to which it is necessary to consider, that as there is an inherent holiness, whereby men's actions and affections are in some measure conformable to the laws of God, in which sense good men in all ages were esteemed holy; so there is a relative holiness, which consists in some peculiar relation to God's service, which may be ascribed to things, times, places, and persons. Thus the tribe of Levi was called the holy tribe, as those that are dedicated to the service of Christ under the gospel are called God's ministers; not that it was always true of them, that they walked before God in purity and piety, and turned many from iniquity; for too often they have gone out of the way, and caused many to stumble at the law; but because they had a particular relation to God in the performance of that worship, which was then paid to him by his appointment. —Wherefore,

*Whose evil
lives should not
deter us from
our duty.*

As to that objection, that many ministers are obnoxious for their wicked lives, It is granted: What then? Does their wickedness void the ordinances of God? No. For though they may be bad men, yet the effect of Christ's ordinances is not taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such who receive the sacraments rightly, and by faith, which are effectual by reason of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.† We may compare it to a pardon passed by an immoral king, or a sentence pronounced by a wicked judge, which are always looked upon as valid to all intents and purposes, because their efficacy depends not upon the qualifications of those in commission, but upon the sovereign authority from whence they both receive their commission so to do. In like manner, the advantages we receive by their ministrations, and the relation they have to God, should still preserve some respect for the persons even of bad ministers. And therefore, as long as ministers are clothed with flesh and blood as well as other men, we ought not to be prejudiced against religion, because some few are overcome by the follies and infirmities of mankind.

* How serviceable the clergy have been to this nation, may be seen in Groom's Hist. Collections.

† See the xxvith article of the Church of England.

But where we have a thorough information of their scandalous lives, it is doubtless a better demonstration of christian zeal, to make proof of it before their lawful superiors; that, being found guilty, they may by just judgment be deposed; than either by our words or actions to affront or condemn them ourselves, or to provoke others so to do. Because the despising the persons, and exposing the conduct of our pastors, diminishes that credit and effect which their spiritual administrations ought to have upon the minds of men, and makes them less capable of doing that good which their profession obliges them to attempt; or, as much as we take from the opinion of their piety and integrity, so much we lessen their power in promoting the interest of religion, whose fate very much depends upon the reputation of those who feed and govern the flock of Christ Jesus. Wherefore the enemies of religion being very sensible of this, omit no opportunity of exposing their persons, and representing their sacred function only as a trade, whereby they procure an advantageous subsistence; which is a mean insinuation, and may be easily confuted by these considerations. Is it not fit that they, who quit all other methods of procuring subsistence, should live of that gospel they preach? and though men may be swayed by interest, yet the truth and falshood of things no ways depend upon it; and the measures of judging concerning them are quite of another sort. Nothing but sufficient evidence should convince an impartial man concerning the truth of what is asserted. And it is most reasonable to suppose, that they, who make it their business to search into these matters, should be best acquainted with the grounds of conviction, and manner of settling such points; Besides, we find that our value for the laws of the land, and the art of physick, is no way abated by the great advantages those make who follow the profession of either of them.

How we must behave towards such.

Why to be respected.

The reason of their contempt.

From all which duties that we owe to the ministers of God's holy word and sacraments we learn, that the contempt of the clergy generally proceeds from a contempt of religion; or when it takes its rise from a more innocent cause, is very apt to lead to it; because a true regard to religion can never be maintained without a proportionable respect to the ministers of that religion: For, though it may pass for a current maxim among some; that priests of all religions are the same; yet I am of the opinion, it will appear a much truer observation by experience, that they of all religions that condemn the priesthood will be found the same, both as to their principles and practices; sceptical in the one, and dissolute in the other.

N

So

The advantages of this duty.

So that one proper method to increase our reward in the next world, is to do all good offices to those that are dedicated to the service of the altar; because he that encourages and enables a prophet for his duty, hath his interest in his work, and consequently in the reward that belongs thereto. Such as receive a prophet out of respect to his function, shall receive a prophet's reward. So our zeal to defend the rights of the sacred order ought the more frequently to exert itself, by how much the more the faithful discharge of their function exposes them to the ill-will and malice of wicked and unreasonable persons. Besides, there is no better way to maintain the peace of the church, and edify the body of Christ, than by preserving a great respect for our spiritual governors, and by submitting to their lawful commands.

Now if what I have here said makes any impression upon men's minds, as it will most certainly, if calmly and seriously considered; it will startle the boldest sinner to find that in contemning this order of men he affronts his Maker; and in despising the ministers of the gospel, he despiseth him that sent them, Luke x. 16. But

Before I conclude this subject, we must observe that God knowing the hearts of men long before, did in his infinite wisdom

The king's supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs.

invest another order or degree of men with a power to punish the evil doer, and for the praise of them that do well, which is stiled the sovereign magistracy, whose supremacy consists in ruling all estates and degrees committed to their charge by

God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal; to exercise their civil power in ecclesiastical causes, as well as over ecclesiastical persons, and in restraining with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers. Wherefore, all persons in their dominions, spiritual as well as temporal, are subject to their authority; because when men become ministers in the church, they do not cease to be subjects to the state to which they belong. Every soul must be subject to the higher powers, which includes an apostle, an evangelist, or a prophet, as well as a tradesman, a gentleman, &c. Yet, by virtue of this supremacy, the ministering of God's word or of the sacraments, is not given to princes, because they are not invested with, nor have a sovereign disposal of, the power of orders. Let it therefore be observed, that

Yet he cannot execute the priest's office.

ers, which Christ left only to his apostles and their successors in

But may punish evil ministers.

the power of the magistrate, when most full and absolute, does not extend either to use themselves, or communicate to others, those spiritual powers, which Christ left only to his apostles and their successors in the church. It would be therefore the greatest piece of presumption imaginable, to pretend to sign and seal covenants in God's name, without

not receiving any power and authority from him in order hereto; as well as the highest insult to God's power, to plead that the attendance at the altar is an exemption from the cognizance of the civil powers.

V. A third great branch of the parental authority, relates to the mutual duties of *natural* parents and their *children*. For, we are commanded to *honour our father and mother*; that is, to love, to reverence, to obey, to succour, and support them. And we shew our love to our parents, when we take such courses as will increase our natural affection; and decline all things that may lessen the same. Parents must be respected by their children, who must pay them external honour and civility; for as love comprehends all kinds of honour, so it is an offence against natural decency, to see children bear themselves upon the square with their parents, to answer them rudely, or to be wanting in respect, in looks or gesture, in words or in deeds. Hearken, says Solomon, *Duties to natural parents.* *Children's duty to parents.*

unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old: and let such as neglect the practice of this and the like exhortations, dread the threatening of the wise man, who also declares that The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. But if parents, through fondness or want of judgment, take off the restraint, remove the bars that kept their children at due distance, they too often have reason to repent thereof: and if there be no miscarriage on it, it is not owing to their discretion, but to the grace of God working early in the children's hearts. Children must not pry into the infirmities and failings of their parents, but conceal them. And that children may discharge this part of their duty better, as it is partly in the parents power, so should it be their great care not to misbehave in sight of their children, nor set them bad examples. Respect is founded upon some supposed excellency, worth, and some superiority; and when parents admit their children to an equality, and make them privy to their indiscretions, follies, and miscarriages, they invite contempt: *Respect.* *Their outward behaviour.*

This is very bad management. And we shew *love* to our parents, when we take such courses as will increase our mutual affection, and decline all things that may lessen the same; which love must be expressed by our endeavours to do them all the good in our power, abhorring whatever may seem to grieve or in any wise trouble them, and praying for 'em. It is so natural and reasonable to love our parents, that few will own the want of it, even when they know they do not love them. And this love and affection will appear to be founded on the principles of common *Love.*

gratitude,

*The reasons
for this love.*

gratitude, because the parental love is hourly exerting itself in all the beneficial acts it can invent; supplies all the wants of helpless infancy, secures from all the hazards of heedless childhood and unthinking youth; shapes the body, preserves it straight and upright, and keeps the limbs in order, and fits them for their natural uses; bears with many troubles and hardships: and though these matters appear so slight, and are seldom thought upon, yet the miseries that arise where this love is abated are not inconsiderable; some of them have an influence on us as long as we live. Besides, this affection informs the mind, and regulates the manners, trains up the reason, exercises the memory, instructs them to argue and understand their little affairs; and educates and fits them for greater matters: this brings them first to God in baptism, and keeps them after in the way of religion, by instilling into them virtuous principles; by reminding them of their several duties; by encouraging them in good, with favours and rewards, and by reproving and correcting them, when evil, and deterring them from vice. These are the ways parents take to make their children happy; not to mention those endless and innumerable labours and troubles that consume their whole life, to make them happy with the good things of this world; so that if benefits can be the foundation of love in children, they must love their parents, who bestow so many upon them. But supposing the parents endeavours after happiness should not succeed to their wishes, as very often they will not; yet if there is no want of love, the obligation is the same on the child; how therefore can we account for the wickedness of those children, who dare curse their parents either openly or in their heart? They who curse them to their face, should dread the sentence of the Lord, who says, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. And whoever with the death of their parents through impatience of the government, or covetous desire of their possessions, should dread to meet with an untimely death from an all-seeing God, as a punishment of so heinous a crime.

Obedience.

The next duty that children owe to their parents is *obedience*: Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right and well pleasing unto the Lord. This is a certain principle: whilst children want understanding to direct their choice and will, they should have no will but that of their parents; and therefore should obey, till arrived at a more sound judgment. Parents must be allowed to discern what is most proper for their children; and though they be now and then mistaken; yet it is always safest to follow their commands and instructions, whose main end and purpose is to do them good: Nothing can be plainer than that parents love their children dearly, and without design, and are older, wiser, and more experienced; and therefore the fittest to command, and to be obeyed.

obeyed by their children; and for this reason, God, to shew us how fit it is to obey our parents, calls himself our Father, and from that relation calls for our obedience likewise. Let them stubborn, headstrong children, consider the ties they have to be obedient to their parents, and they will find both pleasure and security in being so: the approbation of all, and the blessing of God goes along with it; whereas nothing but trouble of mind, sorrow, shame, infamy, and the displeasure of Almighty God, attend disobedience to their good and wholesome commands. But if the command of a parent is to do evil, or requires his child to lye, to steal, or to do any other act by which the laws of God are broken, he must prefer his duty to God: for we must obey God rather than man. *If the commands be reasonable.* The commands of parents must not cause them to do what God our heavenly Father forbids, or to neglect what he commands; because the authority of God is first and greatest: nothing is to stand in competition with it. But even in this case, the command of God must be plain and evident; not a doubtful or disputed thing. In like manner, we are not to obey our parents when they command things contrary to the laws of the land, the publick good being to be preferred to private inclinations.

And in case of *marriage*, children must endeavour to obtain the consent of their parents. *In case of marriage.* For under the law the maid that had made a vow, was not suffered to perform it without the consent of the parent. And it is expressly said, that they shall honour and obey them; and to reconcile marrying against consent with honouring their parents, or marrying against command with obeying them, is vain, when there is a just reason for the parents refusal. And if the son would marry against the consent of the parent, or the father obtrude a match upon the son, the plain resolution is in each case: the father and son have severally a negative; for notwithstanding parents have a great authority, yet they may abuse it; they are not incapable of doing injury to their children, who are to be subject to their parents, but not slaves to their passions. In like manner,

VI. He that suffers wrong, may also be right. *May go to law.* The laws of God do not forbid this; and the laws of the land are free and impartial; they make no difference of persons, know no relation; justice is, in this respect, to be blind; and a son or daughter may, without offence of God's laws, appeal to the laws of the land against their parents in some cases; as for matters of contract, estate, inheritance, or money, when the child cannot live without it: but for a light injury, or any thing easy to be borne, a child should not implead his parent: the hardship must be near intolerable, the injustice great and pressing, when a man's conscience can per-

mit him to go to law with his parent ; it should therefore be plain that the parent is much in the wrong, violating the laws of nature, and putting off the parental love and tenderness, before a child should seek for justice. Nevertheless, this duty is somewhat altered in the case of mothers, when they hasten to second marriages prejudicial to the children of the former husband. The reason of going to law with them will appear more urgent than with fathers, or with mothers continuing in the state of widowhood ; because they have translated their affection and interest to another family ; and most of the comforts arising from such contested money, go to strangers to whom the children have no obligation of parental duty. For when a new affection intervenes, then the prospect is disturbed, and the new wife is supposed to make herself acceptable to her new choice, by carrying with her all the advantages of fortune she can get, and in such cases often forgets her children and former love : in this case, when the reason is manifest, and the occasion just, the suit may be commenced, but must be managed with all imaginable care and tenderness.

*Must help
them.*

Another instance of duty, which children owe their parents, is to minister to all their wants under the infirmities of body, the decay of understanding, and the poverty of their condition. Supporting is a scripture notion of honouring : as St. Paul distinguishes this duty of succouring parents under their necessities by the name of piety, Let children or nephews first learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents ; and the refusal to provide for those of his own house is loaded with heavy guilt. He hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. The wicked Jews indeed made the word of God of none effect by their vows and traditions, and cancelling this duty : but on the contrary, God will cause dutiful behaviour to parents to recommend us to the good opinion of others, there being nothing that makes men more acceptable to others, than such obedient behaviour : it is an ornament of a rich and noble child, and the best recommendation of the poor to favour, pity, and relief, to be known that they are helpful to their distressed parents. The author of Ecclesiasticus, exhorting to be helpful to parents, tells the children they shall find their account in so doing : My son (says he) help thy father in his age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth ; and if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not, when thou art in thy full strength ; for the relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten, and, instead of sins, it shall be added to build thee up : in the day of affliction it shall be remembered : which ought to be a daily remembrance to those children, who deny relief to their distressed parents, and will not part with their own excesses and superfluities, which are indeed their sins,

to relieve the necessities of those to whom they owe their very being ; or which is worse, in the midst of their pride scorn to own their parents in their poverty : This is such pride and unnaturalness as God will never let go unpunished ; for no unkindness nor fault of a parent can discharge the child of this duty which God has commanded.

VII. Hence it cannot be very difficult to collect that there is a duty also incumbent upon the *parent to the child* : a duty that is taught by nature, and enforced by the strongest terms in the gospel, which begins the moment we are born, and never can be dispensed with so long as the child liveth, and is not wanting in his duty to his parents. For, did we only view the natural care of the very brutes for their young, it must be granted that the slothful, over-nice, or unnatural mother, must read her own conviction, who neglecting or disdaining to *nurse* her own child, when able, shall confess that the God of nature ordained that creature, who is blessed with a living off-spring, to give the same its first nourishment. Thus much nature demands on the very first appearance of the child. And, *Must nurse them.*

When we consider that the new-born babe is full of the stain and pollution of sin, which it inherits from our first parents through our loins, (for all men are conceived and born in sin, and before his age is a day long, he is full of corruption) how diligent should the parent be in bringing the child to that *baptism*, which was ordained by Christ to wash away our original corruption, make us members of the church of Christ, give us a right to the adoption of the children of God, and to the reversion of the kingdom of heaven ; and whoever neglects this part of their duty, though we hope God is more merciful than to lay it to the child's charge, is surely guilty of a great misdemeanour, and contempt of Christ's holy institution. Again, *Bring them to baptism.*

As soon as the child can begin to learn, the parent must also begin to *train him up* in the way he should walk through every stage of his succeeding life. For as the child has promised to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him ; so it is the parent's duty to teach him, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what he has promised in that sacrament by his sureties ; to carry him to hear sermons, to furnish him with an early knowledge of the christian belief, Lord's prayer, and ten commandments, and all other things which a christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health ; and that he be christianly and virtuously brought up to lead a godly and christian life. Many other arguments may accrue from experience and observation, to convince parents that it is their duty to bring their children up to the christian *Educate them.*

tian religion; to teach them what they are to believe and practise; to instruct them in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ; to shew them in what condition they are by nature, and to what they are advanced by grace; to how much misery their being descended from so corrupt an original had reduced them, and how their actual sins endangered them, by exposing them to God's wrath, and what deliverance from them was wrought by Christ our Lord. For where this is wanting, neither wisdom, riches, nor honours, can make them happy; without this they will, with all the rest, be miserable. Therefore, if parents would have children honour them, and behave obediently, they must thus bring them up in the fear and nurture of the Lord; they must furnish them with arguments both against error and vice,

Must be taught their duty.

and teach them the christian law, where they will see their duty, and find such lessons of instructions, such encouragements and promises of rewards, as will secure their honour and respect, their service and obedience. If this care be taken, they will, in all probability, prove the good ground that is spoken of by our Saviour; and when they come to years to chuse for themselves, there is little doubt to be made, but they will voluntarily and heartily espouse the religion of Jesus Christ, and will find all the reason in the world to do so. But if no care be taken of them, but the weeds of vice (which are natural enough) be suffered first to possess the soil, that is, their passions, and lust, and pride, and sensuality, and love of the world, have once taken up their hearts, it is very doubtful whether ever they will afterwards be fit for the kingdom of God; whether ever they will be prepared and disposed for eternal life. It must be an extraordinary providence of God that must make them so.

Must give them good example.

Parents must take special care never, as the manner of too many is, to set their child a bad example; for while a child sees his parents give themselves up to drunkenness, or swearing, or any other notorious breach of God's commands, it can scarce be thought but that the child will too nearly copy after the parent's example, and think himself ill-used if the parent shall curb or correct him for his misdemeanours. And

It is no less the parents' duty, when they see their children falling into evil courses, to reclaim them, and prevent their misery; though it anger them, they must not let their duty give place to the child's passion, but only regard what in likelihood will follow, and that is amendment; and not how it will be relished by their children. It is true, parents are

Means towards the education of children.

forbid to provoke their children to wrath; yet to use restraint, reproof, and correction in reason, though it provoke them to anger and impatience, is not to be forbore by parents. The

laws of God and man have left the children to the parents, and will not punish them for doing that to them, which would be punishable if done to strangers: yet parents may not do any thing truly injurious to children; for nature gives them power to do them all the good they can, and only allows them the liberty of afflicting them for a time, in order to their amendment. Where a parent's conscience tells him, that the affliction he is laying upon his child is not likely to do him good, it tells him he has no authority to do it, but that he is without natural affection. It should be the parent's care therefore, that he mistakes not the silence of God's word, and the liberty that human laws leave to parents in the management of the children, that he mistakes not these for the power and authority that nature gives him: for he may be unnatural to his children; though God's word prescribes him no rule how far he may proceed, and tho' human laws will allow what he does, and though his own temper incline him to inhuman courses; a parent may be unnatural for all these, and will be punished by our common parent for cruel usage, which breaks their spirits, so that they have no heart to set about any thing; when they perceive that all they say and do is ill taken, they have no courage to go on; when they perceive their endeavours fruitless, when children do all they can to win the affections of parents, and find them still morose and untractable, it is natural to think they should be disconsolate, and give up all endeavours for the time to come. Such is the consequence of a severe and rugged treatment. But it seldom stops here, it produces a slavish and disingenuous fear of their parents, and such a fear puts children upon mean shifts, to make their peace, or to avoid their fight; they are never easy but at a distance; they cannot please with truth, and therefore try how they can succeed with falsehoods. And as it is a common observation that love and kindness beget love; so nothing is more likely to beget hatred than constant ill usage, because that looks like the real fruit of hatred and ill-will. We can easily discern a difference betwixt a sudden, transient anger, and a settled disposition to severity; when anger becomes habitual, and parents are not provoked, but always upbraid, and punish; then it is natural for the children to despair of pleasing them, and to conclude they are the objects of hatred and aversion; and this will naturally beget a coldness, mean thoughts, evil suspicions, disregard to their commands, and such aversions as will quickly end in downright hatred and contempt.

Moreover, it is a point of the greatest folly for *Children not* either father or mother, as it too often is the case, *to side with* to support the children in contempt and disrespect *one parent a-* to the other: this must never be attempted, it *gainst another.* is indiscreet and unjust; for neither parent has authority to absolve the children of their duty to the other parent.

rent. It may be that one of them is of evil fame, or bad example; yet that does not excuse the child's duty or respect, who must honour them when they can neither be loved, obeyed, or imitated by their children; because, honouring parents is always in children's power: consequently, though the case may be so hard, that children shall not be able to pay obedience to the several or opposite commands of their parents; yet it can never happen so, that they shall not always be able to pay respect to them both: of this they must never fail; for neither parent can be injured by courteous behaviour. So that if one parent should be so unreasonable to require the child to affront the other, the child would be safe in a respectful refusal; because no parent has a right of taking away another's right, and each of them have equal right to the respect of their children; it must indeed be paid to both by all children: and it is a most wicked thing for any parent to command or encourage any rude undutiful behaviour of the children to either of the parents, upon any provocation or account whatsoever. And

*To provide for
their subsist-
ence.*

If any parent, who calls himself a christian, neglects to make a *provision* for his own children, according to his understanding and abilities, he is really a mad man; he denies the faith; he withdraws himself from the obedience he owes to Christ's commands, which enjoin all parents to provide for their children; and especially when there is a necessity of sending them abroad from under their own wing, to make such provisions for them, and to dispose them into such circumstances of living, as that they may both know how to spend their time innocently and usefully, and withal be obnoxious to as few dangers and temptations as their condition will admit. And

*In what man-
ner.*

he is so much worse than an infidel, by how much he is more obliged than unbelievers are to make such provision for his children. But to determine the proportion of provision parents are to make for children, it will be necessary to have respect to their age, capacity, and condition. Their age must be considered, because there is a time when children are so helpless, that all they want must be provided for them, and it can lie on no body so well as parents. Provision includes every thing that children stand in need of; and as they grow in years, their condition, capacity, and abilities of body and mind, are to come into consideration; which call upon the parent to inure them to labour and diligence.

*In some honest
calling.*

Parents are not obliged only to provide for their children, moneys, lands, and houses, as if then they had done; but they must provide them with abilities of body and mind to preserve, and use the benefits they intend to bestow upon them: they must accustom them whilst young to application and attention to business, things necessary

cessary to poor and rich; and without them the rich will quickly be poor, and the poor will never become rich. The poor can never discharge the duty of parents well to their children, without inuring them to labour and hardship; that is the provision they are only capable of making for them, and that is their obligation. At first it looks like doing them no harm to let 'em continue lazy and idle; and many poor people are extremely guilty of this way of education, imagining it a piece of kindness to their children to bring them up in such an idle life, that when they should be able to provide for themselves by honest industry, they must rather beg their bread, than labour for it; a mistake not only mischievous to the common-wealth, but of pernicious consequence to their children: for, though it please them for the present, yet it entails perpetual misery, and often untimely death, by engaging them in wicked courses, the ready road to ruin; whereas the bringing them up to labour keeps them at least in a mean sufficiency, if not in plenty, and puts them into a capacity of rubbing through many difficulties, and bettering their condition of life as providence shall direct.

And as concerning the richer and better sort of people, let such be mindful that they never educate their children above the provision they are able to make for them, and that, whatever provision they propose to make for them, they ought to inure them to as much diligence and industry, attention and application, as they are able to bear. Every one may be serviceable to God and his country; some in one way, and some in another. Here therefore lies the great duty of those who have the care of youth, to place them in such circumstances as best agree with their natural temper and talents. It is a ridiculous thing to train up him to learning, who hath an aversion for a book; or to put him to a trade, or an active life, that is made for study and retirement. The genius, and disposition, and capacity of every one is principally to be attended to, and the education to be suited to them; and then a calling to be chosen which suits with both: and no worldly considerations ought to divert us from this proceeding. Experience will quickly shew that the kindness parents are forward to express, in heaping together vast estates for their children, will not be so truly beneficial to them, unless they take care about their education, by using them to be diligent and industrious, to close application, and attention to what they are to be employed in. For that must be the best provision for children, which will stand them in best stead in all conditions; which will help them to rise from meanness to sufficiency, and to improve a good estate to a better, and to prevent a fall, or to bear it well, and to recover what has been lost. To be well employed, and full of honest business, is much greater security, in as much as it is better to be deaf

*Agreeable to
their state and
condition of life.*

Never in idleness.

deaf to his call, than parley with the devil, when he is trying to draw us from our duty. He that does nothing will quickly learn to do evil; idleness is the mother of all mischief. So the richest parents living are guilty of a notorious fault, to deal too tenderly with their children, let 'em leave them as well provided as they can; and it is great cruelty in parents, that are able to leave them little or nothing, to leave them pride and laziness, and an incapacity both of body and mind to do themselves any service; whose effects are so remarkably bad, that it is a wonder men should need any caution to prevent it: because thereby we find the male children fall into the meanness of servitude, the refuge of the idle or uninstructed part of mankind, or betake themselves in despair to the wars abroad, or to robberies at home; the women fall into the hands of wicked tempters, through want of ability to employ themselves in honest courses, and an incapacity of maintaining their condition; their poverty making them unfit for their equals, and their soft education making their inferiors afraid to take them in marriage.

Children should succeed to their parents fortune. In the next place, it is agreed on by all hands, that the children should succeed to their parents, and inherit their estate and goods; because no one hath a better right to them, when we consider the labour of the parents in acquiring them, or their affection to the children of their own body: for since they love no body like their children, and have a right to the fruits of their own industry, this love entitles them best to their estates when they have done with them: and therefore the civil-law gives to children the estate of their parents, though they die without a will, presuming, that they, who make no declaration to the contrary, do always intend to go along with natural affection, which bestows the estates of parents on the children of their own body. Yet the proportion in dividing estates to children is unsettled. When a child is born, the parent sees one to succeed his labours; and seeks

In what proportion. no farther for an heir to inherit his estate: it then is natural this child should enjoy all the parent leaves, and build up his family; because there is no one else to do it: but after the parent has more children, then the necessity of the eldest succeeding grows less; because there are more children to answer the same end, and to build up the name and family, as well as the eldest; and the necessity is changed into other motives. It is decency prefers the elder to the younger; because he was before him, and has done nothing to deserve being cast behind: so far it is reasonable that he should succeed to advantages; and these considerations induce an obligation on the consciences of parents to make provision for their eldest children, by leaving them the better part of their wealth; and they feel concern when they offend against this

this rule, without such cause as wise and civil nations assign by their customs and laws. Therefore,

VIII. Some of the causes that justify parents *When a child disinheriting their children are, the striking of may be disin-* parents; because there is so much impiety in such *herited.* violence, that one cannot hear of such an action without assenting to its punishment in the utmost degree: the contriving his death by poison, or other secret method; or the having laid snares to draw him into mischief, make him unworthy to receive benefit from his parents: as he also was, who had been privy to any design of doing them mischief, not only to their lives, but to the hurting them in body and fortune. Other causes that justify the parent disinheriting children are, when they are negligent of their duty, when a parent falls into frenzy, or any disability; when he is taken captive by enemies abroad, or imprisoned at home, if the child neglect to make provision for him, or to get him set at liberty, if it be in his power; these cases afford the parent, when he recovers his understanding and his freedom, just occasion of disinheriting such a child; for he was unnatural, and deserves no favour from him to whom he shewed no love and affection. Wherefore it is fit that he should be, in his turn, neglected, who suffered his parent to be so served, when he could have hindered his misfortune: not that hereby it is understood that children are obliged to discharge a parent's debt, for which he has justly lost his liberty; for sometimes the children are just able to live, and have families to maintain: and if they should discharge their parent's debts, they must contract new ones; and some parents are so extravagant, that there would be no end of paying. But when children's faults are scandalous, and reflect disgrace on the parents and family; when they are extremely wicked, and give no hopes of reformation, but appear irreclaimable, they may be disinherited. For, vice and virtue are to be considered by laws, as right and wrong, in the preserving families and tribes: and it tends to the advantage of a state, that virtue in children should have the encouragement of succeeding to their father's estate, and the like discouragement should be given to notorious vice. Yet there is a difference to be made betwixt an unnatural closeness, that will part with nothing to children before death, and a profuse folly, which will lay the parent at the mercy of the child; for in such a case the parent loses one of the most effectual means of keeping them virtuous and dutiful; because it is often found that when there is no more expectation from, there will be no more dependence on the parent: therefore it is highly justifiable in parents to disinherit children, whose immoralities cry aloud to heaven, reflect dishonour on the family, and exclude all hope of reformation; and by parity of reason, if a daughter transgress the laws of honour and virtue, she was left to the pity of her parents, and could lay claim to no

provision by either divine or human laws. In all these cases we excuse the parents casting them off; at least the children deserve it; their conscience reproaches them not of cruelty, or want of natural affection to their children, whose offences dispense with the parent's duty; and without these faults a parent will never be easy, nor innocent in casting off the children of his own body.

And on the contrary, all parents who exercise this authority over their children without reason, and disinherit them for slight transgressions, are criminal: *When not.* if their dislike is founded on no better ground than an ill shape, as if the parents fancy were to pass for judgment, and the children must be punished for what they cannot help: Or on a defect of parts and abilities; not such as would suffice for the plain and honest purposes of life, but such as are to render them accomplished; which are often too near to vanity and confidence, and might be better spared: Or on some personal dislike, which is really blameable; for parents never must pretend hatred or aversion to their children; the subject will not bear it, and whenever parents feel it, they ought to suspect themselves of something much amiss: Or on small faults, that might be pardoned to a tolerable good servant, and should be overlooked in children. Children again are too often dispossessed of the father's love, and of hopes of succession by false suggestions; they are even mistaken by the parents, or accused by others. The second wife is sometimes to make way to the inheritance for her own children, by soft insinuations to the prejudice of the children of the first marriage, or by downright accusation of them: Or this ill province falls to the share of other relations, whose prospect of succeeding is not very far off. But this is most malicious and wicked, and the least that a parent can do, will be to consider whose friends they are, that provoke him against the children of his own body. And parents who consume their estate in gaming, drinking, riot, luxury, and sinful pleasures, do no better discharge their duty to their children, than they who, for little or no cause, anger, folly, or humour, disinherit them. For, tho' it must be granted, that there is a great difference betwixt the minds and affections of these two sorts of parents; yet the effect to the children is the same, who are rendered as destitute and helpless by the one's neglect as the other's displeasure.

To give them good example, and bless them. And, *lastly*, that all other endeavours may prove effectual to the child's present and future happiness, let the parent not only constantly recommend them to God's care, protection, and blessing, with daily and earnest prayer, but strive, by a just and virtuous discharge of his duty, to engage God's promise to shew mercy to the thousandth generation of his posterity, that should love him and keep his commandments; that his seed may be blessed.

blest for ever, and not, with good Josiah, suffer the vengeance of God's wrath, and be cast out of his sight, for the impiety of his forefathers. It should therefore be a parent's earnest care, for to live in God's favour, as to entail a blessing on himself and his children for ever.

SUNDAY IX.

Of the duty of natural and spiritual brethren. II. Of the duty of a wife; consisting in obedience, meekness, fidelity, and love, also of dress, and securing the affections of the husband: And III. Of her behaviour to an adulterous husband. IV. Of the duty of an husband, consisting in love, faithfulness, maintenance, instruction, and prayer. V. Of the chief consideration in marriage, and of unlawful marriages. VI. Of the duty among friends; as, faithfulness, admonition, and constancy. VII. Of the qualifications requisite in friendship; and of the choice of companions. VIII. Of the duty of servants; consisting in obedience, faithfulness, silence, and diligence. IX. Of the duty of masters; consisting in justice, admonition, and encouraging servants in well-doing.

THE next sort of relation in a family, is *Duty amongst* that between BRETHREN; which, in *brethren.*

The strict meaning of the word, denotes those only who are descended from the same parents, and are united in the interest of the same family; whose birth, education, and future subsistence, cannot, according to the course of nature, be expected from any other fountain than their own house. And therefore these ties are mutual, and the parent of them all should have the same unreserved and undistinguished love and regard for them all; so it is the duty of such brethren to *Natural.* complete their common parent's love, by uniting their own hearts and affections, that the good education and careful endeavours, by which their parent strives to promote their present and future welfare, may not be in vain: And, how can brethren hope to partake of their parent's blessing, that curse each other? How can they, who in a special manner partake of each others substance, expect to live peaceably and quietly with strangers, those that are not of their own house, and with whom in the course of the world they must have to deal with, if they be already so unnatural, so unfortunate in their own disposition, not willing, much less endeavouring, to shew bowels of compassion, tenderness and affection, to those who are united to them in the next degree to their parents?

This love is not to vanish away in a strained *The necessity of* complaisance or courtly civility: it is not to be *love amongst* kept up in an outward shew, with a view per- *brethren.* chance to please the common parent, or to stifle some jealousies, or to cover some inexcusable design, in taking advantage

advantage of a sincere and undesigning brother and sister. The love of such a brother as this is worse than hatred, and only waits the first opportunity, like Joseph's brethren, to destroy those he pretends to love. It must be confessed from common experience, that there are few families so well united in affection, as to exclude all jars, wranglings, and debates among brethren; which too often proceed from a secret envy, when one child is preferred unadvisedly in a parent's affections: and this is for the most part the cause of all differences amongst brethren. But this should be so far from prompting us to break with our brother or sister, that we should rather be convinced thereby of the necessity there is for us to love them; to prevent the fatal consequences, which too frequently follow such differences, to the ruin of the whole family; and so to convince our brethren that we neither quarrel with them, nor envy them any advantage, any more than one part of the body does envy another part of the same body; which will provoke them to help forward the good of us all, as being members of the same body. And

*Among spiritu-
al brethren.* As you have heard the duty and interest of love among natural brethren, give me leave to put you in mind of that spiritual brotherhood which subsists among all the members of Christ's church. All christians are brethren by adoption in Christ Jesus, who has established love as the great mark of his disciples: thereby informing us, that as God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem us, to make us members of his body, the church, and children of God: so the spiritual bond of religion should never fail to unite us all in love and charity, peace and concord. For,

*Our duty to
bold communion
with these bre-
thren.* It is not enough to say we are brethren in Christ, because we are all called in one baptism to partake of the promises through Christ; but we must approve ourselves brethren indeed, by holding fast the profession of that faith once delivered unto the saints, without wavering, never through vain curiosity, or unbounded passion, or for any other unlawful means whatever, breaking communion with those who believe and profess all necessary truths. And therefore, as a means to promote this christian duty, it is necessary also that we should shew forth our good conversation in Christ, and our love to his members, by communicating with them in all his holy institutions; not only continuing stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, but also in breaking of bread and in prayer.

*To bear with
their infirmi-
ties.* Such a christian temper as this will induce those who are well grounded in the true faith, to bear with, and not to despise the infirmities of such as are weak, who have been led from the truth by a too rash or mistaken judgment, or by an erroneous education. In such cases as these let no man judge his brother, but judge this rather

her, that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way : receive the weak in faith, but not to doubtful disputations ; teaching him that which makes for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Nor must his weakness or error ever abate our christian charity towards him, no not even if he be fallen into sin. It was the great end of Christ's preaching, to call sinners to repentance ; and how can we be brethren in Christ Jesus, if we do contrary to his doctrine and example ? And therefore, if we see our brother commit sin, we are not to imitate the proud Pharisee, boasting of our own righteousness, and reflect on, or almost make a merit of our brother's faults ; but we must follow Christ and his apostles directions, to restore him that is overtaken in a fault, and consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted. We must admonish him, and endeavour meekly to recover him from the error of his way ; remembering that we must not be pre-
To restore them after falls.
 sumptuous of our own strength, but to take care while we stand that we do not fall, or while we seek the conversion of others, we ourselves do not become cast-aways.

And lastly, we must enlarge our affections, so
To sympathize
 as to sympathize with all the faithful, whenever
with them.
 they, as a church, or singly, for Christ's sake, are brought into tribulation. This is strongly urged by the apostle under the similitude of a natural body ; where if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it : so that whoever is not so touched with the afflictions of the church he is a member of, as to neglect to pray with holy David, O be favourable and gracious unto Sion, and does not pity to see her in the dust, cannot be accounted a living member thereof ; and whoever shuts up his bowels of compassion from any afflicted brother in Christ, at the same time disowns himself to be a disciple of Christ, who has given this as a peculiar mark of his true disciples ; By this, says he, all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

The *sixth* relation is that between HUSBANDS and WIVES. No number of people can
Of subjection in a married state.
 subsist long together without observing their respective duties. None will obey, where all will command ; and then mischief must be the end of all their actions. Wherefore, the longer people live together, the greater is the necessity of subjection to each other ; because there can be no unity, where two parties contend for superiority, or such an equality as will not yield in particular and indifferent cases.

This should convince wives, who are going to make up a family, that there is a necessity of government, which supposes subjection in themselves, and superiority in their husbands ; which is necessary to the support of rule and order, and is rightly placed in husbands rather than in wives : *The wife owes to the husband obedience.*
First, because the apostle expressly

pressly commands the wife to shew obedience: Wives, says he, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord; and again, because the God of nature seems to have declared their sovereignty, by blessing them with the greatest strength and abilities. Where God has made the body and the mind fittest to undergo toils and labours, necessary to the well-being of the world; the carrying on business at home, and trade abroad; the defending one's country from foreign foes, and the administering of justice: where we perceive God has qualified his creatures for these offices, which are so necessary, that the world cannot subsist in peace and order without them, we may safely conclude that therein he designed to place the superior power of government. Therefore, as God hath made men necessary for these works, he hath made them superior to such as are not able to do them; and consequently, superior to the woman; but not with a tyrannical authority, not to use them as slaves and menial-servants; but as friends and companions in all the state of wedlock. Tho' it is granted that there are some instances of women excelling in these particulars; yet they will not overthrow the visible design of God: tho' there be women superior to many men in strength of body, and abilities of mind, in fineness of parts, greatness of capacity, soundness of judgment, and strength of memory; yet the number of such neither is, was, or will be great enough to shew that God intended to give that sex the superiority. But the apostle limits the authority of man over the wo-

In what manner.

man, and describes the manner of her subjection, and shews the cause thereof. Men, says he, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. And to the women he prescribes these rules, Let the women learn in silence, with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach (i. e. in public) nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. Because Adam was first formed, then Eve. Again, the women's subjection is fetched from Eve's being first in the transgressions: she was deceived first, and then deceived her husband; she was undone by disobeying God, and he was undone by following her: she must rule no more: it was part of her curse, that her desire should be to her husband, and he should rule over her.

If his commands are lawful.

Yet this power and obedience of husbands and wives must have their proper bounds; the one may exercise a power that belongs not to 'em, and the other refuse submission where it is due. Thus it is certain, that a wife owes no subjection to her husband against the laws of either God or man; and no command or example of a husband will excuse a wife offending against a known law of God, or doing any thing immoral: she owes him no subjection in such matters; he is himself a rebel to their common Lord and Master, whilst commanding any unlawful action, and she is with him in the transgression. And in other matters, their disobedience

once will be faulty, where they cannot make their excuse by reason and discretion, allowed custom, decency, and good fame: Some may ask, Who shall be judges in such a case? I answer, Wives must not oppose their wills to their husbands, or reasons to reasons, unless they are plainly oppressed, lest they be found to contend for mastery; and if the will and reason of one be equal to the other's, it is something besides that must determine who shall yield; and then we must recur to know who must obey.

Therefore the apostle exhorts the women to a- *Must be meek.*
 dorn themselves with a meek and quiet spirit;
 that is, not to put off their natural temper, and be immediately changed, but so to govern themselves, as to be meek and quiet upon all occasions; that by reason and consideration they restrain themselves from falling into bitterness, impatience, and clamour: many cross accidents will happen, and they must meet with many provocations and severe trials; and if they do not arm against them with a patient, prudent spirit, their sufferings will be doubled: they are not to be insensible or stupid under what befalls them, but to prepare that they may do nothing that misbecomes them; herein they are to exercise their reason and best abilities; matters are seldom mended by the noise and contention that is raised; they are oft- *The danger of contention.*
 times made worse, but seldom better; the folly or perverseness of men are not cured, nor any unlucky accidents remedied, by fury and impatience; and those things by indiscreet management become too often the occasion of great mischief, which would have done little hurt. Who can compare the provocations of their anger with the events and consequences, with any tolerable satisfaction? Mischiefs and sorrow are in the midst thereof; therefore they can find no comfort therein: the learning people get by contention, is commonly too dearly paid for; they only find, that they have weakly lost, what they perchance may never recover again. Yet people, who ought to consider these things best, are so far from inquiring, where, and when they must obey, and in what cases they are at liberty, that they are evermore at liberty, and never in subjection at all, though in the most reasonable cases; but forget their duty and their sex together.

It cannot be but that wives must know that without a chaste conversation they are wives no longer; the band *Fidelity.*
 of wedlock is dissolved before God, and if the husband asks the assistance of the law, it may be dissolved before man also: because this is not without the breach of the most solemn vow that can be thought on: wherefore, our Saviour saith, that though it be not lawful to put away a wife for every cause, yet in the case of adultery it may be done. This is the first mark of her fidelity, which must be always attended with a fru-

gal management of the worldly affairs committed to her charge, so as never to apply her husband's goods and money to any other purposes than he shall approve of, and to the real benefit of his family. Which considerations should deter from such

Must be modest in dress. dress as serves to looseness and immodesty; because the design itself is so abominable, by heating of the fancies, and inflaming the hearts of

impetuous youth, and kindling those impure desires, that will consume both body and soul. A dress put on with this design, is not only blameable, but damnable without repentance. Wherefore whoever dresses to make herself amiable or comely, must ask herself what she desires that grace and comeliness for, and what use she designs to make of people's admiration; and according as that is better or worse, so will her adorning herself be more or less innocent in the sight of God. Again, such a dress as takes up too much time, may reasonably be presumed to be criminal, because our time is given for better purposes. Likewise it should never be forgot, that such costliness of apparel, as exceeds the quality and ability of the wearer, is an offence against decency, that becoming order, which the wisdom and custom of all times and places have agreed upon, as most convenient to difference people one from another, and, in the matter of quality, to prevent all disorder, confusion, and disrespect; it unreasonably exhausts the gain and labour of the calling, when that, which should maintain the house and children, and support the trade and credit of men, is trifled off in shew and gay appearance, not only to the shame, but too often to the ruin of the husband and his dependents. The very heart of industry is broken, when it sees its fruits squandered so lavishly away. It is a certain token of a bad wife, where a woman goes beyond her husband's abilities. Women call their marriage, *changing their condition*; they should then remember among other senses of those words, that they change their former condition for that of their husband, be it what it will, better or worse; and that they must suit their minds to that, which is the only way to thrive in that state. They must also remember that

Love. their obedience is founded upon *love*. This was the end for which woman was created to be a *help to her husband*; so that neither health, sickness, wealth or poverty, or any state of life in which the providence of God shall place him, can in any wise discharge a wife from this duty. For perfect love not only casteth out fear, but forbids all kind of sullenness, harshness, noise, scoldings, or unquietness; and leads to and cultivates a chaste conversation: which if it prevails, they have gained their point; and if not, they have the satisfaction of doing their duty, and taking the courses that were likeliest to effect what they desired; they are excusable both to God and man, and shall not fail of their reward in the last day.

So that sober married women rightly infer, that they are obliged, in common prudence, to secure the affection of their husbands, by putting on such good qualities of the mind, as will render them acceptable to wise and sober men, even when their beauty is decayed. And where men discern the fear of God, and a sense of religion in their wives, and see them manage their affairs with wisdom and discretion, and discharge the duties of every state, mother, wife, or mistress of a family, with diligence and prudence, they cannot resist such qualities as these, which give them grace and comeliness throughout, and render them most lovely in the eyes of all; and will give them grace and favour in the sight of God as well as man. From the whole it then appears, that the faults of a husband cannot excuse a wife from these duties, as well in regard to the commandment of God, as to her own and husband's welfare; for harsh or bad usage can never be supposed a proper means to reclaim a bad husband: therefore says St. Peter, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives, while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear; whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands." Such behaviour as this would much conduce to the quiet of families, for it is notorious that the contentious woman often drives otherwise a peaceable and good husband from his family; which seldom fails to carry him into such places where he may contract the bad habits of drunkenness, company-keeping, or some worse qualifications that may bring them to poverty, and never after be reclaimed. Yet after all, *see*

How to secure the husband's affections.

The faults of the husband acquit not from these duties.

III. It is a proper question to ask, How a woman is obliged to behave herself, when she is sure her husband wanders from her bed? Or, how far she is to exercise a meek and quiet spirit on such ill usage? this has been the subject of many inquiries: and we learn both from the laws of God and man, that in such a case, where it can be proved clearly, the laws of the land will, if she pleases, release her from her bands, and leave her at liberty. But this liberty is not to be humourous; if she again cohabit with her husband, she is presumed to have forgiven his sin, and his former trespass will not be a just occasion for her leaving

In the case of an adulterous husband.

How to reclaim him,

leaving him, when she thinks fit. This will prove her religion and discretion; for, she is undoubtedly obliged to procure the conversion of her husband from his evil ways, by all the methods she possibly can; but she is not obliged to hurt herself on his account: as far as admonitions can bring him to a sense of his injurious usage, and occasion his amendment, she will do well to endeavour it. She may also engage sober people, spiritual guides, or grave relations, to work his conversion, and never with secrecy and tenderness suffer sin, when she can remove it. Yet if she be probably assured, that the man is of a churlish humour, that the very discovery of his wicked folly will harden him in his sin, or provoke him to use her cruelly, she is not in that case obliged to endeavour to reclaim him; for, so long as the prudent wife takes care that her connivance or dissembled ignorance, her compliance and her silence, or her patience and submission, give no countenance to her wicked partner to prosecute his unlawful love, she is without blame; she is not obliged to make herself miserable, by endeavouring to make him good. A wife may

The advantages of a wife's meekness to herself.

permit what she cannot prevent, and by such permission defend herself from wrongs; she may lawfully enjoy all the advantage that living with her husband can afford her, and avoid the mischiefs that would attend a separation: in this case they have need of a meek and quiet spirit, nothing can stand them in better stead: gentle usage wins most upon hardened minds; men are sooner persuaded by silence, when it shews submission without sullenness, than by angry arguments. Superiority is claimed by man as his prerogative, which a meek quiet spirit will yield to him, even while it disarms him; submission vanquishes without resistance, whereas one dispute begets another. Meekness, patience, and forbearance are of that natural force as to remove all matter of contention; they excite a sense of shame, and gratitude, and honour, and leave the transgressor to consider the evil he has done.

The husband owes to his wife love.

IV Our method now leads us to recollect what that duty is, which the husbands owe to their wives. The apostle having said, Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as it is fit in the Lord; he adds, Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them: leaving it as much a duty on the husbands to love their wives, as on the wives to submit themselves to their own husbands. And indeed, the husband first promises to love his wife, before she promises to obey him: and consequently, as his love is the condition of her obedience, he must blame himself for her after-disobedience, if he has withdrawn his love. Now love of husbands to wives, is being kindly affectioned to their persons. This is what is so properly called love, that no-
thing

thing besides is thought so ; and it is absolutely necessary to the making marriage easy and happy ; nothing else can do it. Religion, discretion, and good qualities, birth, education, and estate, are all to be considered, in their several measures and degrees, to make a marriage life lastingly happy ; yet neither honour, nor respect, nor esteem, can make wives happy ; but a tenderness of affection, which they had rather have ; without which, the rest are formality, and insipid courtship, a sacrifice without a heart towards them ; so that it comes to pass that many men are counted happy, and might indeed be so, in the good qualities and discretion of their partners, who yet are otherwise, for want of this hearty affection, which will supply many defects, and make amends for many failings, will cover many faults, and make family inconveniencies lighter : Therefore, considering how much the happiness of a man depends upon his choice, he cannot answer it to God, or man, or himself, that marries where he does not, or cannot place his real affections. No law obliges a man to marry ; but he is obliged to love the woman he has taken in marriage.

When men will not consider the imperfections *Who cannot* of human nature, nor remember their own mis- *make allow-* takes ; if they will take advantages and make ill- *ances for o-* natured reflections on the weaknesses of their *thers imper-* partners, and make them topicks of upbraidings *fections.* and revilings, there will be no love and mutual kindness ; for, all creatures are imperfect, and stand in need of patience and forgiveness ; more especially in a constant conversation. And in the management of family affairs, there will unavoidably arise occasions of disagreement ; and if there be not a readiness to make the kindest construction of each other's actions, the conjugal affection will vanish away. But when a man considers as he ought to do, that it is his interest as well as duty to love his partner, it is worthy his choice to be a good husband ; for, it is the wisest thing he can do for his present ease and satisfaction.

Another duty is to prove the sincerity of his *Faithfulness.* love by a strict faithfulness to the marriage bed : For a christian marriage requires mutual fidelity, and the performance of promise made to forsake all other persons, and to adhere closely to each other, so long as they both shall live : * This is supposed in all contracts ; and verbally expressed and actually engaged for in all regular marriages ; and to this fidelity the men are equally obliged with the women, and in the violation of it there is both injustice and perjury ; because they break a solemn promise, and do a great injury. A man, perchance, may be so far gone in favour to himself, as to think slightly of

his own offences ; in this case, let him consider whether he would not think his mother or daughter, &c. injured, if their husbands should wander from their beds in pursuit of unhallowed pleasures ; and as he judges they would resent the injustice of their husbands, let him imagine that his own wife resents his, and bears it with the same discontent. Nor would I be thought to confine these reflections to the open and notorious ; for the most concealed and secret frequenting of the company of lewd women will corrupt the hearts even of those that intend to be good husbands ; for, the virtuous declines as fast as the disorderly affection gains ground : it ends at best in formal cold civilities, but more commonly in hatred and aversion, in quarrel and contest, churlish or brutal usage ; nay, and sometimes in tragical events : for, it is a vain mistake in any husband to think he shall live easily with his partner, be her affection ever so strong to him, whilst he is cold to her in this particular.

Maintenance. Again, men should maintain their wives as becomes partners ; they are friends and companions to their husbands, not slaves, nor menial servants ; and are to be partners in their fortunes : for, as they partake of their troubles and afflictions, it is just that they should share of their fortunes. For when a husband falls into decay, or any sort of calamity, he involves his wife with him ; they are inseparable companions in misery and misfortune : And what can make amends for this, but the partaking also in all their good fortune ? Does not man expressly promise this in the matrimonial contract, by which it is provided, she is to have the use of things necessary, convenient, and delightful ; to be as happy as his worldly condition can make her in a marriage state ? So he is unjust, as well as unkind, if he deny it ; because she bargains for it upon her part, and he engages for it, upon his. Nor does this obligation cease with the death of the husband ; for if the wife survives, he must provide for her so long as she lives, according to the quality and condition they have lived in (if there be ability) and according to the custom of the place or nation where they are. Whence, note, that not only churlish men are to blame, who deny their wives, whilst living, what is convenient ; but even the best-natured men, who take no care of their support and maintenance, in case they out-live them, are properly bad husbands, who by their profuseness or idleness, by gaming or intemperance, expose them to want and misery, whom they leave naked and unprovided for, at the time of age perchance, when least able to help themselves ; or, it may be incumbered with a charge of children to be maintained out of the widow's small income, or hand-labour. Such men in vain pretend to love and kindness, who are careless in this particular, and make not a provision for their widowhood, as they are able, but leave wives destitute and helpless ; as if the sorrows of their solitary state were not sufficient

ficient to load them with trouble enough. Not that I blame those men whose estate, calling, or industry, cannot competently furnish them with maintenance; but such who carelessly, wastefully, or otherwise, when in their power, take no care to prevent it.

Nor must it be forgot that the apostle lays it *Instruction.* down as a duty of the husband to teach his wife what is for her eternal good and welfare, when he finds her ignorant of the means of salvation; for so much is implied in that command to the Corinthians, where St. Paul bids the wives learn of their husbands at home: which also tacitly implies, that a master of a family should endeavour after christian knowledge, in order to perform this duty of instruction to such as are under his care.

But above all, it is the mutual duty of husband *To pray for* and wife to be instant in prayer to God for each *each other.* other, and to strive together for their spiritual and temporal welfare; not only by exhortation to the performance of virtue, and avoiding and forsaking of vice, but by constant example in the practice of every good work, both in their family, and to every other object of pity and compassion; otherwise their love cannot be accounted perfect: For that love can never be supposed to be grounded on virtue and religion, that can easily permit any one to run to their temporal or eternal ruin, when in their power to prevent it. And therefore,

V. Whoever intends to marry, should not so much regard the outward shape or beauty, *The virtue of the person the chief consideration in marriage.* wealth, &c. as the spiritual qualifications of the persons to whom they desire to be joined; which will make that state of life truly holy, and to serve to the great end of the soul's salvation.

And tho' a competency for the ease of life is to be regarded; yet a virtuous man or woman is of more value than all the wealth and honours the world can afford. But before we conclude, let us consider that solemn charge and declaration in the form of matrimony concerning those that, without regard to the laws of God and man, do rashly enter into that state; for whoever has betrothed

Unlawful marriages.

themselves, by promise, to any other person before, or knowingly takes such a person in marriage, committeth adultery, because, in justice, they belong to those, to whom they had made their first promise. And whoever marries, within the degrees of kindred forbidden by God in Levit. xviii is guilty of incest, so long as they live together. So that they are not only sins at the time, but are evil in their effects; which might be prevented if it were duly considered, as our church teacheth, that marriage is an honourable estate, instituted of God in the time of man's innocence; and "therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in

“ hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, to satisfy men’s carnal
 “ lusts and appetites, like brute beasts that have no understand-
 “ ing; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the
 “ fear of God; duly considering the causes for which matrimony
 “ was ordained, and that as many as are coupled together other-
 “ wise than God’s word doth allow, are not joined together
 “ by God, neither is their matrimony lawful. *See*

Friendship. VI. The *seventh* relation is between FRIENDS; for when men have contracted friendship, and espoused their souls and minds to one another, there arises a new relation between them, beyond what common charity creates. For, in this close and near relation, men give each other a property in themselves, to be guides and comforts in their doubts and sorrows, monitors and remembrancers in their errors and oblivions, shelters and refuges in oppressions and calamities, and trustees to each others thoughts and deeds. How much then are they mistaken, who esteem them their friends, who are only their companions in sin, or prompt, aid, or assist them to offend God, defraud their neighbour, or pollute themselves. Certainly if the drunkard, the covetous and flattering companion, deserves the name and place of a friend; then the devil himself shall claim it in a much higher degree, in the mistaken notion of friendship.

It’s duties. Whereas a true and sincere friend will discover himself chiefly by deterring us from vice, and setting us a pious example of virtue. And therefore,

Faithfulness. True friendship will approve itself further by a faithful discharge of that trust reposed in any person. For a true friend can never be unjust in his dealings, nor betray the secrets of one that puts confidence in him. He that takes advantage of his friend’s credulity and sincerity, or weakness, ought to be despised by all men. These are the treacherous wounds, for which, Solomon tells us, every friend will depart.

Assistance. And the best way to convince any one of the sincerity of our friendship, is to take all opportunities to serve him, and to be always ready to guide him with good advice; to comfort him under anxiety of mind; to relieve him, as much as in our power, in his temporal wants, and even to run some hazards, if it be possible to rescue him from trouble and danger. And this must be a continuing unwearied friendship; a friendship, neither to be dissolved by length of time, nor broken by some slight offences. But

Admonition. The most certain means of convincing any one of the sincerity of our friendship, is to take all opportunities to exhort and encourage him in acts of piety, and with freedom to shew and reprove him for all sinful and unbecoming behaviour: for self-love is so rooted in our nature, and we have that partiality to ourselves, that we do not see our mis-carriages, at least in their true light; and therefore it is necessary some

Some charitable hand should make us sensible thereof. Moreover, all professions of friendship, without the use of such freedoms, will be apt to degenerate into flattery; and it is in vain we pretend to be ready and willing to serve our friends, when we neglect doing them that solid good to the soul. But great regard must be had to time and circumstances, that this practice of piety and friendship may have its desired end. And the occasion ought to be weighty and important; and we should take care that our reproof be free from passion or self-interest, lest any other motive besides doing good should appear; the softest language, and the most favourable circumstances ought to concur to make it of force. Wherefore observe, that the duties of friendship are eminently concerned in putting our friend in mind when he transgresses the laws of God; by representing to him his faults, with the aggravations and consequences that attend them; that by a seasonable warning he may be recovered to a right sense of things, and be preserved from that ruin which otherwise threatens his soul and body. — And we are not only obliged by the bonds of friendship to admonish our friend of his fault, but to take great care we do not fall into those crimes we at first have seen and blamed in him; this will be becoming partaker of another man's sins. For the partaking of other men's sins is, when before any wicked action is committed, we are any ways knowingly aiding or abetting towards the committing of it; or when after it is committed, we are any ways approving or justifying of it; by either of which means we partake of other men's sins, though we are not the immediate actors therein: or, at least, at the same time, we ought to condemn ourselves, that by exposing our follies we may with the better grace rectify those of others; and we ought to mix due praises with our reproofs, that the roughness of the one may be abated by the emulation that is raised by the other expedient. In case we see our friend missed, we must pray for him, the more earnestly that God would bring him to a right knowledge of his duty, and crown him with comfort in this life, and happiness in the world to come. And,

When we partake of other men's sins.

Prayer.

Finally, consider that nothing but breach of trust and incorrigible vice should ever break the unity of friends: and no one betrays a greater weakness and folly, than such whose fickleness and lightness of humour deprives them of the benefit of an old friend. A friend cannot be too old; we cannot enjoy a sincere friend too long. The very continuance of friendship, the constant experience of another's fidelity, assistance, and loving admonitions, must make it of greater value and esteem. Therefore says Solomon, Thine own friend and thy father's friend forsake not: no, though perchance he offends thee in some little punctilio, or light offence. In such a case

Constancy.

reflect if thou never gave him as much or more reason to cast thee off; or at least consider thine own infirmities, and how soon, possibly, thou mayest give him more just reason to turn his back on thee. Not that hereby I would insinuate, that we are so to bear with others under a mistaken notion of friendship, as to countenance any vice, or permit the omission of any virtue. And therefore,

The qualifications requisite in friendship.

VII. I advise that great care be taken in the choice of friends. But it may perchance be asked, What qualification should bind this agreement?

Solomon hath long since observed, that He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but that the companions of fools shall be destroyed; which denotes, that if we design any progress in virtue, we must frequent those who are eminent examples of it, and avoid such fools who make a mock at sin. And,

Choice of company in conversation.

As in the choice of friends, so in the choice of company, let us fix upon such as have virtuous and christian principles, and who endeavour to shew the effects of 'em in their lives and conversations:

for as men of no principles are unqualified for friendship, because they have no foundation to support it; so men that act contrary to their good principles, give but a mean proof of their sincere intentions. Men sceptically inclined may endanger the firmness of our faith, as wicked men may the strength of our virtuous inclinations. This main point being secured, and having fenced against the greatest danger of conversation, we ought to have a peculiar regard to the temper and disposition of those we pitch upon for our constant companions: for, if they have a great deal of passion, and a little share of sense, our freedom and friendship will expose us to vexatious troubles. Let us be never so much upon our guard, a great deal of fire will sometimes heat us; we may be provoked, and then we are the worse for such companions. It is commendable, in the next place, to prefer in our esteem those whose learning and wisdom, quickness and vivacity, may justly challenge a regard; since they must be very agreeable entertainments, when good men of mild temper are the masters of such abilities. This nearly concerns all good christians. And young men, when they appear

It's importance to youth.

in the world, ought to have a particular regard to it, their future happiness depending so much on the qualifications of those they converse withal. It may be they have received good principles in their education; yet they want practice to confirm the habits of virtue, and courage to resist the allurements of vice, when enticed by wicked companions. Do not we daily see that they are apt to catch at any thing that indulges and countenances their inclinations? And why? Because when they want prudence most, they have least of it: for, if

If they are not by degrees entirely corrupted, yet the horror they ought to have for sin, is very much abated by their seeing it frequently practised. Consequently, fire may as well be taken into a man's bosom without burning, and pitch touched without defiling, as bad company frequented and delighted in, without partaking of the bad effects thereof.

VIII. The last relation is that between *MAS-* *Servants owe*
TERS and *SERVANTS*. The servant must sub- *to their masters*
mit to, and do all his master's lawful commands; *obedience.*
for, though he owes his master no obedience a-
gainst the laws of God, or the laws of his country; yet when he
enters into service, he gives up his time and labour by agreement
to his master for wages, keeping, and protection, and must ful-
fill the conditions upon which he is admitted to serve: accord-
ing to that of the apostle; Servants be obedient to them that
are your masters according to the flesh; not with grumbling
and stubbornness, but with fear and trembling, singleness of
heart, and with good will doing service; considering, that it is
to the Lord, and not unto men. And therefore, although a mas-
ter may be churlish, and use his servants ill, they must bear with
him, and submit cheerfully; because of the commandment of
the Lord, who has promised, and is also able, to reward them
for the same. So that

If a servant would be so unjust as to waste that *Faithfulness*
time, and spare that labour, that is none of his;
let him recollect that they are his master's by contract, and his
master ought to have the advantage of them, because sold unto
him: therefore it would be as just for a master to detain part
of a servant's wages contracted for, as it is for a servant to waste
and misemploy that time, and spare that labour, that was his
master's by contract: for a servant has no more right to his
master's money, than the master has a right to his servant's time
and labour: and if the one does not stand to his bargain, he
thereby sets the other at liberty on his part. Moreover, as the
intention of all masters in entertaining servants, is to assist them
in their affairs; as they cannot do all things themselves, there-
fore they trust others to do what is wanting; nor can always be
at home or abroad, where their business may require atten-
dance; therefore they entertain others, to supply those de-
fects. Which ends are not answered, where industry, faith-
fulness, and honesty are wanting on the servant's part. The
absence of the master is not supplied, where the servant does not
act as the master would, if he were present; and the master
lays at home to his loss, if his servant abroad be false in any
shape. Nor must a servant be unjust in behalf of his master,
nor impose upon the ignorance or want of skill of those he deals
with; he must no more recommend himself to his master's fa-
vour by over-reaching others, than he must be unfaithful to
these

those he serves. His duty is to be as useful as he can ; but not to be dishonest. And as the servant's duty is to do all the good he can, and no mischief at all ; therefore all waste and unnecessary profusion is so much damage to the master, and consequently to be avoided ; because it is so much injury done to those, who should be profited by his service. He must then, in the absence of his master, behave as carefully, frugally, and industriously, as he would in his presence ; for to be frugal, and industrious in the master's sight, and in absence to be profuse and idle, is not only eye-service and hypocrisy, but falshood and dishonesty. I wish servants were as much aware of this as they should. Many think it well, if they do not directly defraud their masters of their money or substance ; whereas there is little difference betwixt a profuse waste of their master's goods or time, and defrauding them of some thing feloniously. Do not their masters pay for their profusion ? Which, if it be unreasonable, does not want much of robbery. But of all thefts, the worst is breach of trust : as servants have given their faith to be just and honest, their villainy is greater than that of others, who, though they steal more, have not bound themselves, as servants do, to be honest, and to secure their masters, to the best of their abilities, from others : and this is the reason of the law, which makes it treason for a servant to kill his master during his servitude.

The danger of dishonesty.

Nothing is so necessary to a servant, as the reputation of being just and honest ; and nothing is more certain to undo them than a bad fame, and the suspicion of false dealing with their masters. They have nothing to depend upon but the hopes of lying concealed, and that their thefts will never be discovered ; which hopes are yet so often disappointed, that very few, who have for any time been guilty of this practice, do escape being found out, which ruins their character ; whereas the reputation of servants is so valuable, that many masters will not charge them downright with that sin, who yet are well enough assured that they are guilty : others have cause to suspect, but for prudential reasons will not accuse : and others see it, but would not irritate too far, and make their servants desperate by the publication ; hoping that they will reform. Therefore, servants are deceived if they think that all are ignorant, who are silent ; and that they are unsuspected, because not charged with dishonesty. This is the rule that hired servants may measure their safety by : but indulgence and forbearance would not be discreetly used by masters with respect to them, who are so moveable and fugitive, as to be always wandering from place to place ; who ought not to be borne with for a moment in their wicked devices : but they are proper enough with respect to servants of a better rank, who are tied by covenants for a term of time. It may be these reasons

reasons may not be received; let such servants then consider that whether this discovery be made to men or no, they are open to the eye of God; and their conscience will be always burdened by their false practices. The fruits of injustice may gratify some vain longing for the present; but when that is over, the mind is immediately disquieted at what is past; afraid of shame and discovery, and knows that fact must be repented of, before it can be pardoned: which is much more uneasy than the denial of those desires could have been. Thus a false servant drives a sad bargain, when for so little profit he gives away the peace and quiet of his soul.

Neither let a servant presume so much upon *Submission* to his own good qualifications, as to dare to *answer rebuke*. again. This in the apostle's interpretation is added to the crime of purloining; and St. Peter judges it so necessary that a servant should be patient and meek under the rebukes of a master, that he directs servants, when they suffer wrongfully, to bear it with patience, as a thing acceptable to God. But if they are punished or rebuked for a fault, it is not sufficient that they answer not again; for they must also amend their fault, as a proof of their due submission to their master's will for God's sake. And,

Lastly, A servant must *diligently* attend on *Diligence*. all the duties of his place; and avoid idleness, sloth, gaming, company-keeping, and every other irregular course, which tends to the prejudice or neglect of his master's business; because a negligent servant can never be accounted either faithful or obedient to his master. Moderate labour has advantages that servants do not think of; it makes their necessary service in time grow easy; for, as repeated acts get habits, and things habitual become easy and familiar to us, so continued labours, if done with moderation, when strength and pains are discreetly proportioned out, beget activity, which cannot be long idle. So industry is truly the servant's interest, as well as the master's; for such, as have served with industry and diligence, are secure of better credit and more success in their after-life. By this we may account, why many servants, when they become masters, succeed ill, notwithstanding their desires of thriving; because they have not industry, and cannot take those pains that are truly necessary in their station. Skill and good husbandry will not do without great industry in our several ways, which will not come, when called for, but must be laid up before by use; and experience teaches, that the better servants are to their masters, the better they will succeed when they manage their own affairs; and these qualifications are attained by use; when the mind is susceptible of impressions, and pliable, and the limbs will bend to their work; this is the time of making industry and labour easy to us. And all the care they take, and the pains

pains they are at, is truly their own at the last; all the skill and understanding they get is a treasure for themselves, laid up till they have the greatest need.

Servitude is of God's appointment.

Not through his displeasure.

Has it's advantages.

The state of servitude is necessary by the appointment of the wise Creator: the world cannot be governed and maintained without it; and it is their lot to be instrumental to the publick good in that state of life. Yet this is no token of God's displeasure: for, he in no wise forbids them to use honest means to make themselves free as soon as they can; only he commands them to behave, as becomes their condition, with submission and humility, with obedience, diligence, and industry, with truth and justice, faithfulness and honesty. It is true, the state of servitude is accounted the meanest and most miserable of all others; but yet it is to be made easy: servants have more of the labours of life, but they have less of the cares; their bodies are more fatigued and exercised, but their minds are less perplexed. They are only concerned in one matter, to do what lies before them, whilst others have a world of things to cumber their minds. Their whole care is to their masters; whereas, it may be, their masters must court and humour all they deal with. They generally have themselves alone to provide for; their masters have wives, children, and relations: scarcity or dearth affects them not; if publick mischiefs oppress a nation, they feel little of them, tho' even the government should be changed. Their contribution to the support of the publick is very trifling; they pay no taxes, lose no gainful employments, suffer not by the malice or insolence of parties, undergo no calumny or slander; they are less distressed, suffer less hardships, than those who live in a higher station. And tho' it is not possible for all men to be great, or possessed of places, nor for all men to be rich, governors and masters, or great traders, or remarkable in any faculty, yet all men may be honest, virtuous, and religious; all men may live in God's favour in this world, and be happy in the other. Therefore it is a comfortable consideration for servants (however despicable their condition appears in the sight of men) that in God's eyes, who understands the value of his creatures, they are of equal worth with the great and noble; he has given them bodies as beautiful and useful, faculties of mind as good; made them as capable of being virtuous; has redeemed them with the same precious blood of Christ; opened the same gates of heaven, and prepared for them the same glory in that kingdom of everlasting bliss.

Masters owe to their servants justice.

IX. Now on the other side, in reason and justice, by God's commands, *masters* owe several duties to their servants; and are as much obliged to perform

form their parts, as the servants theirs : for every relation being built on a contract, either supposed, or actually agreed upon betwixt the parties related ; each party is obliged to perform his part of the contract, upon which the relation stands : consequently, a master is faithless and unjust, who suffers his servant to be ignorant or unskilful in his profession, which he covenanted to make him understand ; he breaks his covenant, by keeping back the skill that is necessary. And he that serveth is deceived, and loses the thing he bargained for, and for which he pledged his faith and service, for a term of time. So to withhold the price and reward of service which has been bargained for, is a foul practice ; the reward is the servant's due, he has already paid for it ; and to defraud him of it, is to rob him. And as it is injustice to deny what is the servant's due ; so when the servants cannot, by legal courses, obtain that due, thro' the power of their masters, they are oppressed as well as wronged. But these masters are often met with, though in a very faulty manner ; for whilst the servants live with them, they commonly copy their masters vices, and, amongst others, injustice ; so living upon them, they pay themselves with interest. Again, the detaining the wages of poor men is still a greater hardship, who daily subsist by their labours ; but the injustice is the same, whether you bargain by the day or year, in detaining their hire. And it is injustice to withhold either food, raiment, or any profit that a servant has contracted for.

Nor must the master conclude that he has performed the whole of this duty, when he has justly *Admonition.* complied with the contract agreed upon with his servant : for it is his duty also, not only to *admonish* and *reprove* his servant for any neglect or injustice discoverable in his own worldly concerns ; but, if he finds him deceitful, or telling lyes, or otherwise offending God, he must tell him of his fault, endeavour to reclaim him, and threaten with holy David, that no deceitful person shall dwell in his house, nor he that telleth lyes shall continue in his service. Besides, the law of the land has provided for the convenient and better instruction of servants of all kinds, that *all fathers, mothers, masters, and dames, shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, which have not learned their catechism, to come to the church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and be ordered by the curate, until such time as they have learned all that is there appointed for them to learn.**

Yet after all, the giving them good advice, *Good example.* and affording them opportunities of serving God at home and abroad, the instructing them according to their leisure and abilities in the rules of honesty and justice, *truth*

* See the Rubrick at the end of the Church Catechism.

truth and faithfulness; exciting them to diligence and industry, and encouraging them therein, will comparatively speaking be very inconsiderable and of very small force, either towards fixing in the mind right principles, or forming in their manners a habit of virtuous practice; if in the private life and conversation of those, by whom families are to be directed, there appear prophaneness and impiety, or lewdness and debauchery, or tyrannical oppressiveness, and violent and unreasonable passions. For how affectionate soever the exhortations of the preachers of the gospel be, and how often soever repeated instructions be given to young persons either in schools or otherwise; yet if the examples they find at home in the practice of common life, be vicious, debauched, and altogether contrary to the precepts and admonitions given them in form; the effect of all such instruction, I say, cannot but be, comparatively speaking, very inconsiderable.

Moderation in commands.

Again, *moderation* should always accompany the masters commands and impositions; they must not oppress them, but have a merciful respect to their servants capacity and strength. The Lord instituted the Jewish sabbath, partly, that servants might be relieved, and not consume a miserable life in continued labours, without some intermission. And though a master ought not to permit his servant to live in idleness, yet a servant is not to be consumed with toil, nor deprived of the benefit of serving God; he is not presumed to consent to such a bargain, though his time and labour are his master's property.

Encouragement in well doing.

Other care is fit to be taken of servants, in health and sickness; by such means we are likely to make good servants, especially if we encourage them in well doing, as we ought to do, by using them with good nature and bounty according as their faithfulness, diligence and piety recommend them to our favour; there being none of so abject a spirit, but who will strive to make amends for kind, good-natured treatment. Thus it is written, Masters give to your servants that which is equal and just, knowing that ye have also a master in heaven; one from whom you expect the performance of those precious promises, which of his grace he hath made to you; one, from whom you look for all the benefits temporal and spiritual, that are fit for him to give, or you to receive; and one, who hath promised to be a bounteous master to all his faithful and obedient servants, to shew mercy to such as shew mercy to others. Which is again enforced by what our Saviour saith of himself: Behold I am among you, as he that serveth; and this he said, not only to give his disciples an example of humility and condescension, but to sanctify all conditions of life, and to shew that God looks not with man's eyes, that he hath no respect to persons, that he regards not birth and fortune, quality

quality and title ; but that the meanest people in the world are acceptable with him, if they do his will: that it is virtue and religion which recommend men to his favour, of which servants are as capable, as those masters which are rich and mighty, and most honourable. Wherefore, as he hath made them partakers of the same grace here, and capable of the same glory hereafter, so he commands them to be treated with mercy and compassion. Therefore we should not use servants as we do our beasts of burden; and it is one of the worst ways in the world of shewing our superiority, by giving ill language and words, which no man is deserving of ; and if the truth were known, the service is not the better performed for upbraiding language. Those servants that perform their duty, do it better with good words, and live more comfortably ; nor must masters be over rigorous in punishments, when servants are faulty ; but inflict them with deliberation, and mercifully, and upon just occasions.

In fine, we vainly seek for ease and happiness *The necessity of* in liberty, and disengagement from our relative *the relative* duties ; for, it is evident that, as this world is or- *duties.* dered, it is impossible to be at ease, but by a faithful discharge of those several obligations laid upon us by the relations we contract amongst ourselves. How can we be possibly happy, when we cease to be good magistrates, good subjects, good christians, good fathers, good sons and good brethren, good husbands and wives, good friends, good masters and good servants? For as we are sociable creatures, we must have all the social virtues, nor can we expect to receive any, whilst we pay no duty, to whom it is due from us.

SUNDAY X.

- I. *Of negative and positive justice to our* NEIGHBOUR ; and first *to his soul.* II. *Secondly to his body, including murder and the several ways of committing it, as also of duelling; the heinousness, punishments, and strange discoveries of murder.* III. *Of maiming, wounding, stripes, and fighting, &c.* IV. *In what cases it is lawful to shed blood.* V. *Of self-murder ; it's infamy, causes, danger, and means to prevent it : and of melancholy persons and prisoners, that make away with themselves.* VI. *Of justice towards the possessions of our neighbour ; and first concerning his wife, secondly his goods ; and of injustice and oppression.* VII. *Of theft, including not paying of debts, bad securities, vexatious law-suits, protections, and frauds, not discharging bonds, securities and promises ; and* VIII. *Of stealing.*

I. **I** Come now to those duties towards our *Duty to our* neighbour, which are contained in the *neighbour,* sixth and following **COMMANDMENTS ;** wherefore let it be observed that the laws of God, relating to the *life*

life of our neighbour, are transgressed by all real mischiefs and injuries whatsoever, done by one man to another, or brought by any man upon himself; and by all debaucheries, whereby men destroy themselves, or which they draw others into, to the ruin of the health of their bodies, and the reason of their minds. They are also transgressed by all wilful frauds, and deliberate adulterations of things made use of either in food or medicines; and by every thing whereby any man receives detriment in his person, nor is it, in any of these cases, a sufficient excuse, in point of religion and morality, to alledge, that the evil which follows was not intended: for every man is answerable not only for the evil he directly intended, but also for the accidental ill consequences of that action, which it was his direct duty not to have performed. Because our duty to our neighbour is founded on JUSTICE and CHARITY: Therefore for method's sake I shall reduce all the particular duties we owe to our neighbour under these two general heads.

Justice negative and positive.

JUSTICE to our neighbour, is to do no wrong or injury to any one's *soul, body, possessions*, or *credit*; and to give every one their whole due or right. For,

Though the *soul* of man is an invisible substance, and therefore not to be hurt by any outward violence, which the body is subject unto; yet it is capable of many impressions, by which it is not only hurt and wounded, but even killed, if we consider it in a natural sense. For,

In the natural sense.

The soul, in the natural signification, is the heart, or mind, or spirit of a man, which all men know, had not Solomon taught us, may be broken with sorrow and afflictions. Consequently, malicious and spiteful men, who without cause vex and grieve their neighbour, hurt and wrong his soul, and are guilty of a breach of justice.

In the spiritual sense.

The soul considered in it's spiritual state, is that part of man, which must live for ever in an eternal state of glory or misery. And as under this consideration it may be hurt, by sin in this world, and punishment in the next, which is the consequence of sin; so that person that tempts another to sin, is instrumental to drag him to punishment, and as much accessary to the hurt of that soul, as a murderer

Drawing to sin the greatest injury.

Direct means of it.

is to the death of the body he has killed: because sin being the direct opposite to that grace, by which alone the soul is enabled to live for ever in the sight of God, becomes the disease and wound thereof; which is given *directly* by every one, who commands any one under his authority to do an unlawful action, or adviseth another to do some wicked thing, or entices others, by either pleasure or profit, to do any wickedness; which means is much enhanced, when

men

men either help to contrive, or to put their wicked devices in execution: Or *indirectly*, by giving *Indirect.* bad example; especially by those that carry authority in their station of life: because many are so void of grace as to copy other men's vices as they do their dress, for fashion sake. Again, by not shewing a dislike to what we hear or see done in defiance of God and his laws; or, *thirdly*, by justifying and defending any evil or sinful act in themselves or others; and, *finally*, by making a mock at sin, and contemptuously deriding the faith of Christ, through which alone we are to be saved. So

As these are the means by which men commonly injure the soul of their neighbour, by drawing him into intemperance, luxury, drunkenness, or uncleanness, and many other vices; it *Men ought to consider whom they have thus injured.* behoves every one to examine himself, how often and how many he has hurt by any of these particulars: for, it is not sufficient to say, I have wronged no man, by maiming his body, stealing his goods, or undermining his character; because whomsoever we draw to sin, we have endeavoured to bring to eternal punishment. This is as it were secretly killing the soul under the pretence of friendship; and is much worse than a murder of that sort acted upon the body, as the soul is more preferable to the body, and eternal misery is more to be dreaded than death. Besides, such a murderer cannot hope to escape unpunished at the last day, forasmuch as Christ declares, that whosoever shall offend (or tempt, entice, or encourage any one to sin) any of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. So that

Whoever is thus accessory to another's sin, becomes also subject to, and has reason to expect *Heartily to bewail it.* the same punishment; except he begins early to judge and bewail himself for all these things, in which he has wronged his neighbour, and firmly resolve never to cast a stumbling-block in his way for the future. And if it be possible, he must endeavour all that he can, by *Endeavour to repair it.* admonition and good example, to reform him whom he had caused to sin. So far *negative* justice regards the souls of men. And,

II. Now let us consider *negative* justice in regard to the *bodies* of men. This forbids us to do wrong and violence, the highest degree of which is killing the body, and is the sin forbidden in the *6th* COMMANDMENT, *Thou shalt do no murder*: that is, Thou shalt neither by open violence, in defiance of the laws of God and man; nor secretly or treacherously, by the means of another's sword; nor by false accusation; nor by poison; nor by any other *private means*

means whatever, take away the life of thy neighbour; which are too often suggested by an old grudging, or covetous or ambitious heart, to satisfy a malicious passion, or to make way to some profit or preferment; Or, it is too often become the practice of

Several ways of committing murder.

loose women, who kill their infants to hide their own shame. Besides, they who entice others to drinking, or other excesses, which bring on diseases, and, by weakening the body, not only deprive them of health, the most valuable comfort of life, but thereby hasten the time of death, cannot hope to be clear from their blood in the sight of God. And again, whoever excites or prompts another to such a pitch of anger or revenge, or blows up the coals of dissension between others, he certainly cannot be guiltless, but must expect part of the punishment, if it ends in murder.

Of duelling.

Duels, or fighting in private quarrels, are open breaches of this commandment, because disallowed by divine authority; and therefore the guilt of murder is chargeable upon the persons engaging in them. For the plea of self-preservation is utterly foreign to the conditions and circumstances of him who formally gives or accepts a challenge. And he adds to the sin of making an outrageous attempt upon his neighbour's life, by throwing himself unnecessarily into the utmost danger of losing his own, not only life, but soul also. For those who die in such engagements, go into the other world not only void of charity, but glowing hot with wrath and fury; and when these qualities have the last possession of their souls, what society of spirits can that be which their souls are qualified for in the next world? And, provided they do not perish in the conflict, is it worth a man's while to run into the hazard of suffering eternal misery, for the sake of redressing an injury, or resenting an affront? Consequently, all arguments of human invention, to countenance such a wickedness, must be evasive and deluding; and to fear men more than God, is the most dishonourable misapplication and degeneracy of fear. There is nothing which religion doth more severely forbid, than this revenging of injuries in a private way; nor is there any thing more strictly enjoined than forbearance and forgiveness; even so strictly, that we cannot, without hypocrisy, say our daily prayers, unless we be in charity with all the world. Therefore, whoever engages in duels through fear of suffering little seeming calumnies and reproaches, which, in the judgment of the wisest men, are not really such, doth at once forfeit all just pretensions to true courage, honour, and generosity of mind, and all claim and title to eternal life. Moreover,

Murder committed in thought.

This precept extends, according to the interpretation of Christ and his apostles, to our *words* and secret intentions. Our blessed Lord expressly appli-

applies it to the several degrees of causeless anger, breaking forth into contumelious and reproachful language; and, in St. John's account, Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Because such as have not sufficient degrees of natural courage, want opportunities actually to defile their hands with blood, may yet sacrifice their neighbour in their secret thoughts, and indulge their imagination in the view of those mortal wounds which they dare not give; and men who are afraid to handle the instruments of death, may shoot out their arrows, even *bitter words*, and pierce the souls *Word.*

of their brethren with the expressions of cruelty, despitefulness, and scorn: But they may justly fear, that the blood thus shed in enmity and conception only shall be laid to their charge, and that the rewards of the false and cruel tongue shall be, as of the iniquity itself, mighty and sharp arrows with hot burning coals. For whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother Racha, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

If the guilt of this transgression be taken from the indignity offered unto God, or from the injury done to man, or from the punishments expressly denounced against it, or from the anguish and horror which it is apt to leave upon the mind, we should find reason to assign it a place among the loudest of crying sins; for, the first instance of murder was followed close by perplexity, oppression of spirit, and despair. My punishment is greater than I can bear, rather, Mine iniquity is greater than that it can be forgiven, says Cain, who slew his brother. And it follows, Every one that killeth me shall slay me; the whole creation must be alarmed, and stand ready to execute vengeance on me; and that weight of confusion, which natural conscience scarce ever fails laying upon such sinners, must be increased by the expression of God's indignation. The Lord abhors the blood-thirsty; and has expressly forbid the shewing any mercy or compassion to a murderer; will accept of no satisfaction for his life: for, as he has declared by Moses, if a man comes presumptuously upon his neighbour, and slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die; and when the sentence of death is pronounced upon him, this reason is subjoined, For in the image of God made he man. Besides, there are special aggravations in the injury done to man, as well as the indignity hereby offered to God: For injuries may be repaired, or admit of some satisfaction; but this is utterly irreparable: other injuries may rob a man of his estate or reputation, or of some particular temporal satisfaction and advantages; but this is the summary of mischief, and deserves him once for all of every temporal satisfaction whatsoever;

ever; and who can tell but that this injury may prove fatal to the sufferer's soul, as well as the body, and at once consign him to the first and second death, by depriving him of that space to repent, which may be necessary, and might have been sufficient to the accomplishment of his salvation? Or, if the injury should not fall upon him under a state of impenitence, and press him down into everlasting destruction, yet must the weight of it, even in relation to his view of that eternal state, fall heavily upon him: who can bear the thoughts of being thrown headlong into the other world, instead of moving thither through the common course of nature and providence? Even the best of men would be glad of a few minutes at the last, to review and mourn over their miscarriages and defects; of a little space of time in the conclusion of their lives, to prepare them for their appearance before the glorious and unspotted presence of God: and if these advantages be so desirable; how grating must that injury be, which deprives men of them?

The great punishment attending it.

Shall they then escape God's justice, who thus dare to wrest, as it were, the power of life and death out of the hand of God? You have read of the punishment of Cain: and let the dreadful death of Jerebel and Ahab, which God sent upon them for the murder of innocent Naboth, deter every one from this worst of sins. I would instance the vengeance of God upon such murderers who perished miserably, as Absalom, for the death of his brother Amnon; and Rechab and Baanah, who themselves were put to death, by the very person they thought to please by the murder of Ishboeth: but it would be needless to multiply examples from sacred history, or ancient times, when every age produceth sufficient evidences, that no murderer can escape the just wrath of God. For,

The strange discoveries of it.

God hath armed every sensitive part of the creation against this wickedness; for not only a man's own conscience, which must be privy to the sin, from that time racks him, and becomes a punishment to him worse than death, but frequently compels him to confess the crime, that justice may be executed upon his body, and too often drives him into the murder of himself; nay the very brute creatures have frequently detected this unpardonable barbarity. They therefore that duly consider this

We must watch diligently against all the approaches of this sin.

sin, with it's punishments, should guard themselves from all the ways of committing it: for if we give way to passion, there is no security that it will not end in murder, anger being a madness which deprives us of our reason; so that we can't tell what we do, when influenced thereby: If malice gets us into it's power; or if covetousness, ambition, lust, or any other sinful desire gets dominion over us, they will not stick at murder to

serve

serve their wicked purposes. Again, as intemperance will cut off the life of man, we must not only not entice a man to drunkenness, nor keep him company, but we must ourselves refrain from that vice; because our example may draw others to the same. And finally, not to mention the many other cautions against this sin of murder, which are easily to be infer'd from some of these heads, let us take care neither to encourage, nor contribute to that contention that may take away life; and so shall our hands be innocent from blood that is shed against the command of God.

Neither may we dismember, maim, or deface our neighbour's person; which sins, wilfully committed, if they are not a direct and effectual breach of the command, are at least a partial violation of it. The judgment of God has abundantly declared the guilt of such practices, wherein one of the slightest instances of these crimes, even in the case of a bond-servant, the master's cruelty of striking out a tooth was the servant's discharge from his servitude. Besides, these outrages have a natural tendency to the death of the party, which frequently follows, or disable the sufferer from getting his bread, which in the event may prove a more lingering and tormenting death. And if we are accountable for the consequences of our actions to God, why not to our fellow-creatures?

Does not every one dread the loss of a limb, and would we not do and suffer any thing, and part with any of our worldly goods, to preserve in time of danger? And then is that doing as we would be done by, if we attempt that to another which is so intolerable to ourselves: which is highly aggravated where the injured person happens to be poor, who must labour for his living, and is perchance the only support of a poor family; then he that deprives him of his limbs, by which he maintaineth himself, is a man of blood, for he that taketh away his neighbour's living slayeth him.

What satisfaction then can be made in such a case? It is certain that we cannot restore the limb; but we must keep him if able; and if not, must relieve and support him by our own extraordinary labour; for whatever new affliction, or what sin soever this brings him into, we must answer for him before the judgment-seat of Christ.

And this commandment, by just interpretation, may be extended to forbid all kind of injury done to the body of our neighbours, such as wounds and stripes; for, if mercifulness to the beasts that perish is commanded, much more is this cruelty and unmercifulness to fellow-creatures forbidden. We must do justice to every man in publick and in private, *we must do to others as we would*

Maiming, a great injury.

That which every man dreads for himself.

Yet worse if the man be poor.

Necessity of making what satisfaction we can.

Wounds, stripes and injuries.

they should do to us : not what other people actually do to us, but what we would they should do unto us. If we go no farther than the act of retaliation, as the common practice is, and if we justify ourselves in this manner, saying: Such a man refused to do me a kind office, when it was in his power, and why should I serve him? He treated me with rigour and severity, when he had opportunity, and why should not I treat him in like manner? This is not doing as we would be done by, it is the language of passion, and not of reason, or of one filled with the grace of God. Can we be justified in doing what we condemn in another? Or shall that be a fault in him, and a virtue in us? By the law of nature we are allowed to defend ourselves, but never to take vengeance: and christianity teaches us not to measure our own by the behaviour of other men. Certainly therefore,

This cruelty to others the effect of pride.

Nothing but excessive pride, and contempt of others, can ever induce a man to wound one of the same nature with himself, who can scarce bear, without the utmost discontent, the least reproachful word. But what can be pleaded by way of excuse for those persons, who take pleasure in the cruelties they exercise upon their poor neighbours upon vain pretences, and without any mercy: or for those inhuman tempers, that set others at fighting to take pleasure therein? In fine,

The case of Abraham not to be imitated.

The case of Abraham in designing and attempting to sacrifice his son, does not fall under any of these reasons or observations, but depends upon circumstances which were peculiar to his own person, and such as never were or ever can be drawn out into a precedent, or with any colour of reason be assigned as a vindication of any private person, who should make an attempt upon his neighbour's life; he was called to this by a revelation from God, and therefore must not be pretended to be imitated by any one, who cannot bring an undoubted proof of the same authority. Wherefore, every private person without a revelation from heaven, and not ignorantly or accidentally, but knowingly and designedly, and all that without any necessity arising from the imminent, or otherwise, unavoidable danger of his own destruction, does take away or invade his neighbour's life by open assault or secret contrivance, in person, or by agreement with any other, by command or persuasion, consent or consultation, suggestions, or insinuations, bearing false witness, or hiring others so to do; or by any other means but what has been already mentioned above, is chargeable with the guilt of the sin of murder.

When taking a man's life away is not murder.

IV. Yet as there is no law, but will admit mitigation; so both passion and reason have endeavoured to find an exception to this commandment: the former striving to quiet a reproving conscience

conscience by various pretences and false colours; the other clearly explaining the true intention of God's precept, shewing in what cases it is lawful to take away a man's life. As, we may lawfully take away a man's life in the case of self-preservation. This is so certain and obvious, that it can scarce admit of any mistake, when the danger is manifest, when he must unavoidably either give or receive the fatal stroke. We may lawfully kill a man in battle, if we are satisfied that such a war is undertaken by a state or kingdom, to support and maintain it's just rights, or even sometimes to preserve itself or it's allies from utter ruin. It is needless to prove that magistrates are invested with a just authority to inflict capital punishment upon offenders, or that it is just to cut off the corrupted members of the body politick as well as natural, for the preservation and benefit of the whole. The innocency of that person is unquestionable, who, through pure ignorance, or unforeseen and unavoidable accident, deprives another of his life; for an action, which has no foundation in the will, is not properly criminal, and the nature of every action, with regard to good or evil, is determined by the intention: so that where there is no intention of doing the action at all, there can be no morality or immorality in that action. And therefore under the Mosaical dispensation, a sanctuary was, by divine appointment, provided for every one, who was so innocently unfortunate as to kill his neighbour ignorantly and at unawares; lest the avenger of blood should pursue and slay him, before his innocence could be sufficiently cleared up.

V. Every person, who knowingly and wilfully *Of self-murder.* destroys his own life, is guilty of murder; for God only, who gave us our life, has a right to take it away; and by consequence every man, who offers violence to his own life, does manifestly invade the prerogative, and usurp the right and authority of God. It is true, there are many examples among the heathens, who fell by their own hands, upon some pressing extremities; yet their rules, laws, and reasonings, forbid such practices. Examples against rules are of no authority. Men of loose principles have always had false notions of liberty, honour, and courage. And though we live in an age, where every extravagant and wicked thing is justified by some wretch or other; yet we should be loth to have posterity believe that this was the general sense and judgment of our age.

Let us then consult the wise, the laws, the rules and reasonings of the grave and governing part; and from them we shall learn that self-murder was an abhorred practice; that whatever pretence it made to honour *To be abhorred.* and courage, it was but cowardice, fear, and a mark of a poor spirit, that sunk under the common calamities of nature: A practice to be abhorred and condemned with all our zeal, to be guarded

guarded against with all our care, reason, and religion; walking in the ways of God, and pouring out our prayers for his preventing and assisting grace, that his fear may be ever before us, and that temptations to such impiety may never overcome us. And considering the love of ourselves, the inhumanity of the crime, and the dangers run by those who are guilty of self-murder, it is surprising how any person can resolve upon such a desperate self-condemning action; especially as they who murder themselves know and confess they are tied by the sixth commandment, not to commit murder; the letter and sense of the command will reach not only his neighbour but himself also. Though a man were weary of life, and sought for death; as people in pain, for ease; and wearied with labour, for rest; yet would it be unlawful to give him the satisfaction he desired, by killing him; because it would be murdering of that single man, and because of the mischiefs which such a death brings upon his family. Whence we ought to remark, that murder does not barely consist in the violence that is offered to one against his will; but in taking away a life, which he has no right to take away, by laws human or divine: and as a man hath no right himself, therefore he can convey no right to another, to take away his own life. But yet observation proves, that when men engage in wicked practices, and find they are brought to shame or danger, their minds are not equal to their burthen; so that they can bear the guilt, though not the shame: this confounds and oppresses. But,

It's infamy. Those, who have not the fear of God, nor their own salvation, before their eyes, should consider what sorrow and confusion are unavoidably occasioned to the nearest friends they have in the world, by parting from them in such a manner. Neither poverty, nor bodily afflictions are so hard to bear, as the shame, reproach, or infamy, or even the apprehensions of such a woeful death. And will you entail on your kindred and family the reproaches and ill usage of an insulting and uncharitable world, with perplexing doubts and fears concerning your condition in the other life? What ingratitude is this, to do mischief and dishonour to those you love? These considerations have hitherto had their weight with heathens; and shall christians break through all considerations of their own honour, interest, and duty, and not be content to live, at least till they can die, without doing wrong or mischief to their friends? A christian that believes that the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness; that without repentance, sins cannot be forgiven; that after death there is no repentance; that such a man as this, professing the faith of Christ crucified, and covenanting with God, in baptism, to take up the cross, and bear it, if need be, to death, should, in the impatience of his soul, pressed by some calamity, deliberately chuse to throw his burthen off, by committing a sin of which he knows he never can

repent

repent, and venture the dreadful consequence to everlasting ages, is what nobody could ever reason themselves into the belief of, if the frequent practice of unhappy people did not convince us it may be perpetrated. Therefore, it may be an useful caution, to have our minds prepared, and affections subdued; that we may not be destitute of succour from reason, or give ourselves up to the guidance of present passion.

This is the lot of those, who fall into the desperate *Causes thereof.* rate resolutions we are treating of: their passions are highly indulged and yielded to; so that when grievous accidents befall them, they know not where they are, nor whither to turn; they can bear no loss nor fall from the condition in which they were, but abandon themselves to despair of God's help and mercy. They place their whole happiness in possessing of riches, enjoying honours, and in the praise of men; and when riches take to themselves wings and fly away, when they fall from their honours and dignities, they know not how to breathe in any other air, nor to want the courtship and respects that were wont to be paid, not to their persons, but to their power and interest. So when they sink in their reputation, they are dejected to the lowest ebb; are afraid that every eye views them with contempt, and that every tongue is reproaching them. But,

Can this be a sufficient plea for self-murder? no, the miseries men endure will end in death at last, which may come quickly; and the sins that brought them to that *It's danger.* misery will be forgiven upon repentance, be they never so great and many: but the course they pitch upon to relieve themselves, is a sin that admits of no repentance, and consigns them to eternal pains and sorrows, the punishment of murder in general; or they expose themselves in a particular manner to the greater condemnation, by some particular sentiments and dispositions, which are commonly the root and foundation of this unnatural sin. Do not those men, who destroy themselves to avoid present offerings, resolve that God shall not dispose of them as he pleases; but that they will wrest their lives out of his hands, and not offer him to prolong or continue them beyond the limits of their own will? If this be their language, as by their actions it must be, what can be expected, but that God should execute the fiercest of his vengeance upon their disobedience? If pride, and envy, and ambition, have so much power over their minds, that they will violently remove themselves out of the world, because they are not advanced to a more advantageous situation in it; what can they reasonably expect or imagine, but that they should feel Solomon's observation, in the most extensive sense of it, that pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall? And what foundation can there be of hope, that God will forgive a flagrant sin, without the sinner's repentance for the same? Or, can it be conceived, that a man should repent of a sin in whose commission

commission he ends his life? These are some of the many reasons against self-murder. Yet,

Means to prevent it.

When men come into those perillous hours, they are generally deaf to all reason, and listen only to the suggestions of their passions; and if they be not prepared beforehand to withstand such assaults, they seldom do it when the danger approaches. Wherefore, it is more in men's power to be innocent, and out of difficulties and streights, than, being involved, to deliver themselves from the distracted counsels and suggestions of their despairing minds; although they be such as all men would have startled at and abhorred, when free of such distractions; and I must add, a man overwhelmed with misery is not inclined to ask, nor capable of taking counsel when offered. Therefore, how much safer is it to secure men from such principles as occasion, than retrieve them from the power and influence of these perplexing thoughts? Let them consider that God is the best of beings; and that a being absolutely and necessarily good, can never intend any thing unmerciful or cruel; for it is observeable, that few attempts of this kind are made, till religion is mastered, and its impressions effaced, or men are so misguided, as to think these mischiefs may be done, and religion be safe. But

Of melancholy persons.

Those unhappy people, who lying under the dreadful apprehension of God's anger, accounting themselves vessels of wrath, and fitted for destruction, and not being able to live under the torment of that thought, put an end to their miserable lives, are most to be pitied whilst alive, and spared when dead, since nothing can look so like distraction as that distemperature of brain which makes them act so strangely; with whom I would thus expostulate: If they are vessels of wrath, is this the way to ease them? If they believe themselves consigned to misery in the other world, what do they get by throwing themselves into that place of torment before the time appointed? This is to die for fear of death, and indeed a great deal more disastrous.

And so, Let me conclude with a word of advice to condemned criminals, who sometimes attempt to prevent their legal punishment by dispatching themselves. Do they think that they save themselves the shame of dying publicly? vain imagination! What can these wretches propose by falling into the hands of the living God sooner than they need to do, if they lived as long as God would let them live? but what can more resemble madness, than to believe that Christ died for such as repent, and believe the gospel, and yet to distrust he died for me, who am so sorry for my sins, that I would give the world (if it were mine) I never had offended God, willing rather to lose all the world than to commit the like any more, and to purchase the favour of God with

with my blood, rather than that his displeasure should rise against me? Let them, who can say this is not repenting and believing, say what is so; and yet this is the case of many unhappy souls. And what can be liker to distraction, than to believe and repent, to sorrow and amend; and yet conclude themselves vessels of wrath under God's vengeance?

VI. I have already shewn how far, and by *His possessions.* what means any one injures his neighbour in his soul and body; now in the next place I shall declare in what manner a man may be wronged in his *possessions*; in which his *wife* may properly be said to be the chief: and therefore I shall proceed to shew the heinousness *His wife.* of a breach of the *seventh* COMMANDMENT, where it is said, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Because,

This act of injustice of enticing a man's wife from her husband's bed, is doing wrong not only to the man, but to his wife also; for as much as she is thereby robbed of her innocency, and deluded into the high road of eternal perdition, by *The enticing a man's wife the greatest injustice.* bringing her into the guilt of both lust and perjury; and, not to mention the discredit, which a blemish throws upon her character, it most certainly chills her *To the woman.* proper affections towards her own husband, and that seldom fails to end in loathings, disgusts, and a multitude of other evils, which of all others make the marriage state the most miserable. And,

What greater injustice can be done to the husband, than to rob him of the love and faithfulness *To the man.* which is due to him from the wife of his bosom, and overwhelm him (if it be found out) with the most anxious pains of jealousy? Besides, the world is so unjust, as even to add to his sorrow, by reproaching the injured man with scorn and contempt, only because he is injured: and what can it be called less than theft and robbery, should the injured husband be burthened with the providing for a spurious offspring of his wife's adulterous practices? for such a child would take from the legitimate; and therefore it cannot be ever satisfied without restoration to the defrauded family of as much as such a provision has taken from it. And here it would be proper to remark, that, under the Jewish law, the adulterers were to be stoned to death; because, it is presumed, that no man can ever make a sufficient satisfaction for so great an injury to the soul and body of his neighbour. And this should warn those, *The most irreparable.* who continue now in this crime, that they repent; for tho' the Jewish law is abrogated, yet God's justice is still the same; his knowledge penetrates the most secret parts, and he will call men into judgment, and punish them with death eternal for unrepented adulteries, which must be lamented with a whole life of penitential exercises.

Secondly.

His goods. Secondly, We must not injure our neighbour in his *goods*, that is to say, in none of his possessions, whether houses, land, money, cattle, or any thing that is his property and right; by endeavouring to hurt, damage, or to defraud, or any ways get any of them for our own use, which includes both malice and covetousness.

Malicious injustice. The *malice* of this injustice appears, where no interest nor profit can follow to the person, who takes a pleasure to hurt, damage or destroy the goods of a neighbour whom they hate: an action, which most nearly resembles the continual practice of the devil, to undo others without doing himself any good; but much exceeding him in wickedness, for as much as he only envies creatures of another nature, whereas the malicious man persecutes those of his own nature. And,

Covetous injustice. It's *covetousness* is most notorious, which will be better understood when considered under the distinct heads of oppression, theft and deceit. For

Oppression. *Oppression* is an open violence and force against our neighbour's goods, and a sin condemned by all; and even those, who practise it in some of its very criminal branches, where the halter is not about their necks, will cry aloud against it. For no state or condition of men are secure from it. Many rich, honourable and powerful, both nations, princes and subjects, have been deprived of their rights, liberties and estates by violence; and gifts, bribes, grandeur and authority have too often corrupted or over-awed a judge, and taken place of justice; in which case all persons concerned, as well the lawyer that pleads, as he that gives sentence, are guilty of oppression. Again, whoever takes advantage of a poor man's need, and extorts too great usury from him, under a pretence to supply his pressing necessities; or a griping landlord, who puts his tenants on the rack; or those, that are in any wise entrusted with assessing, taxing and rating their neighbours, and not only do it without justice and mercy, but too frequently lay hold of such opportunities to gratify some private pique or resentment; these or any other extortioners exercise but different branches of the sin of oppression. But,

God's vengeance against it. Let them remember the danger they risk; for the Lord has declared by the mouth of his prophet, that he who hath oppressed the poor, and hath spoiled by violence, shall surely die, his blood shall be upon him. Therefore take the advice of Solomon, who exhorts us not to rob the poor, because he is poor: neither to oppress the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

Theft. VII. the *second* sort of this injustice is *theft*, which is an unlawful taking, using or keeping of
our

our neighbour's property, either by force or fraud. The extent of this sin is wide and deep, and discovers itself in defrauding our creditors, or with-holding what is our duty to pay or return, and in taking from our neighbour what he already possesses : so that all debts, stealing, deceit, or breach of trust and deceit in traffick, are to be considered as parts of theft. For,

He who lends to one man, and gives him credit for money or commodities, or accepts of security for what he lends to another, acquires a right to be justly repaid according to contract ; the debtor hath only a right to use what he borrows for his present convenience or necessity, but the property remains in the hands of the creditor, who hath the same right to it, as when it was in his own custody : which obliges us to borrow no more than we have a fair prospect of repaying ; unless he that credits us knows our inability, and is willing to run the hazard of the loss. Because, whoever engages himself in debt, beyond what he can reasonably hope to repay, takes that from his creditor, upon promise of payment, which he knows he is never likely to restore him : which is at least, as high an injustice, as if he had taken it by force, or on the highway. What then shall we say of those, who refuse and deny it, or take indirect courses either to abate, or avoid the payment of their lawful debts ? This is not only to deprive a creditor of the present use and possession of his money, but of his property too.

*Not paying
what we owe.*

*Not intending
to pay.*

The same is to be said of borrowing upon false or insufficient securities, such as bad mortgages, counterfeit pawns, or insolvent bondsmen ; for he who takes up his neighbour's goods or money upon such securities, as he knows are incapable of repaying him, doth as manifestly wrong him, as if he had taken them by stealth or violence. Whence, as our debts are our creditor's rights, if we would be just debtors, we must neither reckon what we owe to be our own, nor so dispose of it, as to put it out of our power to restore it to the true proprietors ; for in so doing we rob and injure our creditor. And,

*Borrowing on
bad securities.*

They ought to be no less careful to repay it upon due demand, or according to contract. Because as it is unjust to deprive a creditor of his money, so it is unjust to deprive him of the use and possession of it any longer than he consents and agrees to it ; wherefore, such debtors as put off their payments without their creditors consent, when it is in their power to discharge them, or put them upon fruitless attendances, and make advantages of their money against their consent, and beyond their contracts and agreements, fall into a degree of injustice, next to that of robbing and despoiling them of it ; consequently, by an indispensable rule

*Putting off
payments
when due.*

of justice, every debtor is obliged rather to strip himself of all, and cast himself on the providence of God, than by denying his debts, or indirectly shifting the payment of them, to feather his nest with the spoil of his neighbour's property.

Vexatious law-suits, protections and frauds.

Therefore, when by refusing to pay what we owe, we force our creditors upon costly or troublesome suits to recover their own; or by pleading protections, or sheltering ourselves in a prison, we avoid being forced to it by law; or by fraudulent breakings, we necessitate them to compound our debts, and accept a part for the whole; which soever of these ways we take, I say, to deprive our creditors of their rights, we are inexcusably dishonest. It may be that by these or such like knavish evasions, we may force them to acquit and discharge us; yet we cannot force God, in whose book of accounts our debts are recorded, as well as in theirs; and it concerns us sadly to consider, that there is nothing can cancel them there, but only a full restitution: and that if they are not cancelled there, all the tricks and evasions in the world will never be able to secure us from a dismal reckoning, and a more dismal execution at the bar of divine justice.

Not discharging bonds.

The same justice, which obliges men to what has been already said concerning debts of their own contracting, calls upon every one to discharge those debts also, which either through friendship for the debtor, or on any other account, they have made their own by being bound for another, who is either incapable or unjust enough to refuse payment. It is true, the case is hard with the bondsman, to pay for what, as they commonly say, he has neither eat nor drank, and in all likelyhood will detriment his family, and perhaps bring him to the very brink of poverty: but suppose the worst, he cannot blame the creditor for these consequences, whose right to his money cannot be superseded by any act the debtor can do, or any thing the bondsman can suffer, till the value received is duely and honestly restored. So that, such misfortunes are severe cautions for us never to enter into such engagements rashly, or without good grounds of security to ourselves; but no countenance for breaking them, on which the creditor placed his chiefest confidence, and therefore must either be paid by that means, or is cheated and betrayed. But,

Not paying what we promise.

Of all debts those of a man's own voluntary promise admit of the least excuse for non-payment, or wilful with-holding of them. Does not David, in his description of a just man, command us, as it were, to pay those promised debts, though they have been made to our own disadvantage: and as they include the wages of servants, and the hire of the labourer, so whoever delays to discharge them must remember the express command of God: Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether

whether he be of thy brethren, or of the strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it: for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.

VIII. When a man takes from another what is *Stealing the already in his possession*, then *theft* is called *steal*. *goods of our ing*: under which head we properly reduce those *neighbour*. most notorious rogues that rob upon the highway, and those that forcibly break up houses, and carry off their neighbours goods or chattels; as also those little pilfering thieves, whose fingers cleave to every little thing they see in private: against both whom the law of the land has enacted the punishment of death, which few ever escape that make a constant practice of this injustice; and nothing but timely and sincere repentance can secure them from the eternal punishment of God's justice. So dear is the price of their iniquity, as to venture not only their neck, but to barter their soul likewise for every little trifle they steal from another, or buy, or receive, knowing it to be stolen; which many, who seem to abhor stealing, are guilty of, in buying such things a little cheaper than at common price. Nor must we conceal our neighbour's goods; for if we find a thing, and know it's right owner, and keep it for our own use, we cheat him, and thereby are guilty of theft.

SUNDAY XI.

I. *Of deceit in trust.* II. *Of fraud in trade, and of the rules in traffick and bargaining, to use plainness, no extortion, nor oppression, nor unjust weights and measures, nor bad money; and of the advantage of fair-dealing.* III. *Of evil-gotten goods, and the necessity of restitution.* IV. *Of our neighbour's credit or good-name, including false reports, censoriousness, false-witness, publick slanders, whisperings, despising, and scoffing at infirmities, calamities and sins: of tale-bearing, and reasons against these vices.* V. *Of positive justice; which requires truth and condemns flattery, lying, equivocation, envy, and detraction.* VI. *Of respect due to men of extraordinary gifts, rank, quality, wealth, and to the poor.* VII. *Of gratitude to benefactors.*

I. **N**EXT to stealing follows the injustice of *Deceit*. **DECEIT**; which I shall describe under the heads of *trust and traffick*.

Breach of trust includes *defrauding* and *promise-breaking*, and is a great sin: for he who trusts another, doth hereby unite him with a particular bond of society to himself, upon a promise to be served so far as he trusts him. So if I accept the trust to be an arbitrator in a cause, or an executor of a will, or a guardian to children, a factor, or assignee, or a keeper

a keeper of any pledge, I am admitted as a partner and a representative in such matters, and my fidelity stands engaged for my behaviour in those several trusts. Wherefore, if by my neglect I suffer any of his trusts to miscarry, I am dishonest and injurious to him; because I undertook to do for him all that I can suppose he would have done for himself, had he been master of my skill and capacity. So that if for a bribe I betray the trust he committed to me, or convert it to my own advantage, I rob him more infamously than if I demanded his purse by open violence: because, then I make use of that trust to betray his interest, by which I was as much obliged to secure and defend it, as if I had exchanged persons, and his interest were my own: so, to betray his interest for my own advantage, when he had made me next his own person in power, is dissingenuous perfidiousness and injustice; which should also be a caution to all those who have the king's commission, all publick and parish officers, as well as to stewards and servants, that they faithfully discharge their respective trusts. But in every of these frauds, where God or the poor are immediately concerned, as in all estates for, and legacies left in trust to, pious and charitable uses, the theft or breach of trust becomes *sacrilege*, the malignity of which crime is particularly condemned by the sentence of the wise man, who says that it is a sin to devour that which is holy.

In traffick.

The second sort of fraud is in matters of *traffick* and *bargain*, when either the buyer or seller receives any damage or loss: for, bargains in buying and selling being a voluntary exchanging of interests, we owe this duty one to another, to deal honestly in making and faithfully discharging our engagements. So deliberate or contrived fraud is in itself a crime of the deepest malignity, and of the most pernicious consequences: a sin which tends to destroy all human society, all trust and confidence among men, all justice and equity, which is the support of the world, and without which no society of mankind can subsist. And the breaking through this obligation by deliberate fraud is, of all other sins, one of the most open defiance of conscience, and the most wilful opposition to right reason, that can be imagined. Then for a christian,

*The common-
ness of injustice
a reproach to
christianity.*

a man who professes a pure and more holy religion, a religion that commands not only common justice and equity, but singular love and goodwill towards our neighbour, to be guilty of a contrived and deliberate fraud, which the conscience even of a good heathen would abhor; this is a greater aggravation of the crime: because, as the end of buying and selling is to furnish one another with the necessities and conveniencies of life; both buyer and seller have a right proper to them, so to buy and sell as that the buyer may have the worth of his price, and the seller the worth of his commodity: for otherwise, in-
stead

stead of mutually assisting, we must necessarily oppress each other. Therefore,

Notwithstanding it may be a difficult matter *It's rules* to determine nicely what the exact measure is, which in buying and selling ought to be observed between man and man; yet in all cases, when any opportunity of dealing presents itself, it is but asking ourselves, how we would be dealt by in the same circumstances? And our answer to that, is our duty to those we deal with: I know how I should expect to be used, if my neighbour and I had changed persons and circumstances; my heart tells me, that I should think it reasonable to expect such measures from him, and therefore he hath reason to expect the same from me: when I consult myself how I would be dealt by, those very passions, which incline me to wrong others, will instruct me to do them justice. Consequently, there is no rule in the world can be pressed with fewer incumbrances, or darken'd with less intricacy; none that can lie open to larger use, or be readier to present application, or more obvious to all capacities. How then can men pretend to excuse themselves, when their duty lies so plainly before them; or would not do their duty, when they do understand it? Therefore,

Use *plainness* and *simplicity* in all your dealings: do not by disparaging another man's commodity, or over-valuing your own, endeavour to draw on an advantageous bargain; neither ask far beyond, nor bid much below, what reason *We must not conceal the faults of our goods.* must inform you to be the real worth. Do not say you cannot take less, or give more, when you know you may with sufficient profit to yourself. Make no false pretences, nor cover what is true; but, so far as in you lies, fit your affirmations and denials to the understanding of the person you deal with, and do not lie in ambush behind your words, to trap and ensnare the person with whom you transact: For, not only that which is false, but that which deceives, is false and unjust in bargains.

Do not *impose* upon any man's unskilfulness or ignorance. So long as you keep within the latitude of lawful gain, you may use your skill against another man in driving a bargain: for, in an ordinary plenty of commodities there is an ordinary price, which those that deal in them know and understand; and when the contractors equally understand the price, there can be no deception or injustice in the contract, be it made never so hard. On the contrary, if he whom I contract with be ignorant or unskilful, I must not rate his want of understanding, or set a tax upon his ignorance, but use him justly, as one that reposes a trust in me, and casts himself upon my equity: for, if I do not this, I am guilty of injustice.

The same may be said where a man takes advantage of another's necessities; when a poor *Use no oppression.*

man is driven by his wants, and forced to sell his wares to supply his necessities ; give him the price you would have done, if he wanted your money no more than you need his goods. On the other side, if the poor man be forced to buy upon trust, increase your price no higher than what makes you recompence for the loss, which by the rules of trade you sustain by the credit you give him ; because he who makes advantage of another's necessities, adds oppression to misery ; which is not only injustice, but cruelty. Neither must we take any thing from the commodity or price, for which you have bargained. He who

Nor unjust weights and measures, buys a commodity by weight and measure, hath a right to as much as the common standard allows him ; and to take any thing from the bargain by *false weights or measures, or adulteration,*

or by falsely weighing or measuring, is no less than theft. And he who sells a commodity, hath a right to the money for which

Nor bad money. he sold it : And if the buyer knowingly pay him *uncurrent coin,* or forcibly detain from him any

part of the price, he also manifestly violates the indispensable rules of justice. And in all these, or the like doubtful cases, chuse the safest part : for not only a good but a quiet conscience is to be valued above the greatest gain ; and that man hath but little regard of his conscience, who, to get a shilling more in the bargain, will venture to expose it : For,

These are not the ways to be rich. The usual bait of injustice is gain and profit : this is the common mark that fraud and oppression aim at, though usually they fly short or beyond it, and, instead of enriching, do finally damage

and impoverish men. It is indeed known, that unjust dealing may sometimes raise a man's fortune ; but it is as well known, that in it's natural tendency it impairs and ruins it ; because by dealing unjustly he makes it every man's interest to forsake him, and sets a cross upon his own door to warn all customers from entering therein. Is it reasonable to suppose, that any one would knowingly have to do with a knave, that always lies upon the catch to cozen him ; with whom he can neither speak nor act securely, but must be forced to stand upon his guard continually ? Or, how can a man thrive, when no body cares to deal with him ; when his house is haunted, and his frauds and cozenages appear like sprites at his door, to frighten all men from his shop ? So you see that justice in dealing is so necessary to men's thriving in the world, that even they who are not honest, are fain to seem so : but for a man to seem to be honest, is no way so secure as to

The advantage of fair dealing. be really so ; for, if he be not, the event of things will unmask and set him out. For, no man can be secure of privacy in an unjust action ; let him carry it ever so demurely, one accident or other will draw the curtain, and bring to light the fraud and villainy behind

behind it ; so that how much soever a man may gain by a present cheat, he is sure, if he be discovered, to be a loser at the last. Injustice is as great an error in politicks as in morals, and doth bespeak a man to have as little wit as honesty. The sum therefore is briefly this ; he that in the whole course of his life acts sincerely and justly, with a continual respect to the reason of things, and to the law of God ; that carries on all his undertakings by fair and equitable means, avoiding all frauds and deceits, all base and unworthy practices ; this man takes the wisest and surest course to succeed in all his designs, respecting either his present or his future happiness. And,

III. If a man should thrive by his fraud and injustice here ; alas ! what comfort can he take in his *ill-gotten* wealth ; when every part of it awakens some sad reflection in his conscience ! Yet this is the case, when all a man enjoys, when the very meat which he gorges, and the drink which he guzzles, the cloaths which he flaunts in, shall thus reproach and upbraid him with an O wretched man ! we are the price of thy inno- *Evil-gotten goods.* cence, and thy eternal happiness : for us thou *Give continual disquiet.* hast freely consigned thy immortal spirit to everlasting confusion ! When his bags and coffers cry guilty ! guilty ! and every thing he enjoys, whispers some accusation against him ; what comforts can he take in the purchase of his frauds and oppressions and cruelties ? yet, this is commonly the fate of unjust possessors, who, under the disguise of a chearful countenance, too commonly wear woful hearts. Since therefore injustice is a damnable sin, it necessarily follows, that when a man deals unjustly by another, he must either *And ruin the soul eternally.* resolve to undo his own act, or to run the hazard of being undone for ever ; the former of which is a ridiculous vanity, and the latter a desperate madness. What a vanity is it for a man to do what he resolves to undo, to slander with a purpose to vindicate, and cheat with a resolution to refund ; that is, to do an evil thing with a purpose to be never the better for so doing ? And seeing every wilful act of injustice binds men over to eternal punishment, and nothing but restitution can release from that sad obligation ; it follows, that he, who deals unjustly by others, without an intent of making restitution, doth by his own act wilfully oblige himself to endure eternal torments, and the loss of heaven. Therefore,

Before he can hope for pardon he must resolve *The necessity of* on restitution. Concerning which, observe that *restitution.* it is that part of justice to which a man is obliged by some former contract, or a foregoing fault, by his own or another man's act, either with, or without his will. The borrower is bound to pay, and much more he that steals or defrauds. In the case of stealing, there is an injury done to our neighbour, and the

the evil still remains after the action is past ; therefore for this we are accountable to our neighbour, and we are to take the evil off from him, which we brought upon him, or else he is an injured person, and a sufferer all the while: and that any man should be the worse for me, by my act, and by my intention, is against the rule of equity, of justice, and of charity ; I do not that to others, which I would have done to myself ; for I grow rich upon the ruins of my neighbour. So that if the wrong I do to another man be such as is repairable, I must resolve to repair it, or to perish eternally. He, who doth not repair an injury when he is able, doth every moment continue and repeat it ; and though the first act was transient, and died in the commission, yet if it leaves a continual evil behind it upon the good name or estate of my neighbour, I am as much obliged, if I am able, to remove the evil from him, as I was, not to bring it upon him ; and while I neglect to remove it, I wilfully continue the evil upon him, and in so doing, continue to do him harm. When I rob or defraud a man of his estate, or any part of it, the sin doth not cease with the act of stealth or cozenage, or violence, which ends or expires in the commission, but continues so long as the damage or evil effect of it remains: whilst he suffers in his estate by my act, and it is in my power to repair it, I continue injuring him. Wherefore, our sin can never be pardoned till we have restored what we unjustly took, or wrongfully detained: which we must really perform, when we are able. Which doctrine, besides it's evident and apparent reasonableness, is derived from the express words of scripture, reckoning restitution to be a part of repentance, necessary in order to the remission of our sins: If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, &c. he shall surely live, he shall not die. And the practice of this part of justice is to be directed by these rules following. That person, who

Methods of restitution. is a real cause of doing his neighbour wrong, whether by commending or encouraging it, by counselling or commanding it, by acting it, or not hindering it when he might or ought, by concealing it, or receiving it, is bound to make restitution to his neighbour ; if without him the injury had not been done, but was done by him or his assistance ; because by him his neighbour is made worse, and therefore is to be put into that state from whence he was forced. That person who intends a small injury, to his neighbour, and acts it, and by it a greater evil accidentally comes, is obliged to make an entire reparation of all that injury, which he intended, and of that which he intended not ; which yet was only consequential upon the former act, going farther than he at the first proposed it ; because his original mischief was the cause thereof. Whoever hinders a charitable person from giving alms to a poor man, is tied to restitution, if he hindered him by fraud or violence, Whosoever refuses to do any part of his duty (to which

he is otherwise obliged) without a bribe, is bound to restore that money, which he has unjustly taken. Such as by fact, or word, or sign, either fraudulently or violently does hurt to a neighbour's body, life, goods, good name, friends, or soul, is bound as far as possible to be done, to make restitution in the several instances. The adulterous person is tied to make provision for the children begotten in unlawful embraces, that they may do no injury to the legitimate by receiving a common portion: and, if the injured person demands money, he must satisfy him with money. So the murderer is bound to restitution, by allowing such a maintenance to the children or near relations of the deceased, as they have lost by his death, considering and allowing for all circumstances of the man's age and health. The slanderer and backbiter, who hath really lessened the fame of his neighbour by fraud or violence, is bound to restore it by a confession of his fault, giving testimony of his innocence or worth, doing him honour, or (if that will not do, and both parties agree) by money. Whoever hath wounded his neighbour, is tied to the expences of the surgeon and other incidences, and to repair whatever losses he sustains by his disability to work or trade; and the same in the case of false imprisonment; in which, and all other cases, the injured person is to be restored to that perfect and good condition from which he had been removed by fraud or violence, so far as we are able. A ravisher must repair the temporal detriment or injury done to the maid, and give her a dowry, or marry her if she desire it; because this restores her into that capacity of being a good wife, which by the injury was lost, as far as it can be done. Such as rob a neighbour of his goods, or detain any thing violently or fraudulently, are bound not only to restore the principal, but all it's fruits and profits, which would have accrued to the right owner during the time of their detaining. Thus the sacrilegious, the detainers of tithes, cheaters of men's inheritances, unjust judges, false witnesses and accusers; those that do fraudulently or violently bring men to sin, that force men to drink, that laugh at, and disgrace virtue, that persuade servants to run away, or commend such purposes, violent persecutors of religion in any instance, and all of the same nature, are all in justice obliged to make restitution. And, in like manner, he that hath wronged so many, or in that manner (as in the way of daily trade) that he knows not in what measure he hath done it, or who they are, must redeem his faults by alms and largesses to the poor, according to the value of his wrongful dealing, as near as he can judge. Whosoever has contracted debts, must, as soon as he can, discharge them; for as we read that Jesus Christ pronounced salvation to the house of Zaccheus in the same day that he had made restitution; so if we do likewise, we have the same hope that he will grant us his salvation.

His credit.

IV. The *fourth* branch of *negative* justice concerns the CREDIT of our neighbour, because every member of human society has a right to credit and a fair character, if deserving, among his neighbours and acquaintance; for who will trust a man of a lost reputation, or who would willingly have any society with one in whom he cannot confide? Is it that there is nothing generally more dear and valuable to men than their reputation or good name, which is rather to be chosen than riches; and it, as a precious ointment, perfumes wherever it spreads, and therefore it is what the wisest and best men have been always very tender of preserving in themselves, and what good christians ought consequently to make great conscience of taking wrongfully from others; because man's ability to do good to himself, to his friends and neighbours, the success of his affairs, the comforts and interests and most of the conveniences of life, yea and sometimes life itself, depends upon the credit a man has obtained among his neighbours: and therefore whoever is guilty of defaming his neighbour, does in effect the same thing as to defraud him of his property: for so much reputation is always so much power. I shall therefore shew the nature and extent of this sin. And

False reports.

First, A man's credit is impaired and injured by *false reports*, under which head I shall include not only the spreading knowingly, and maliciously, false reports concerning any person, either for some private advantage to ourselves, or out of envy towards him, or in way of revenge for some conceived affront: But let what will be the cause, this is a sin of the deepest dye, and condemned amongst the most detestable crimes, where it is declared in scripture, that all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. But

Censoriousness.

Further, under this head also we must include the careless and rash custom of spreading *censorious* and *uncharitable* reports to the disadvantage of our neighbour, without at all knowing whether there be any truth in the accusation, or any just ground and foundation for the censure; and this is the mother of innumerable sorts of calumny, detraction, slander, evil-speaking, backbiting, tale-bearing, rash judgment, and publishing any thing of our neighbour that is really true, yet needless, and contrary to the laws of charity, declaring their neighbour's real infirmities, or real faults, to his disadvantage; without serving the purpose of any true benefit either to him, or others; for this is against the express command, Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people. The apostle ranks backbiters with the black crimes of those who are given up to a reprobate mind, and which in the judgment of God are worthy of death; and he puts slanderers and revilers with those that shall not inherit the kingdom of God; and when he

reckon

reckons up the sins of the last times, evil speakers are in the list of that black catalogue. St. Peter joins evil-speakings with malice, hypocrisy, and envy, offsprings of hell; and notwithstanding the highest pretences to religion, St. James assures us, that he that bridles not his tongue, that man's religion is vain; and in that it is contrary to that wise dictate of nature, of doing to others as we would they should do to us, it is an open violation of that christian doctrine of charity, and is a sign of a weak mind, which is not able to bear the lustre of merit and virtue. 'Tis the mark of a mean and cruel temper, unworthy of a man, to delight in wounding our neighbour, or to widen those wounds, which have been made by others. This frequently puts on the appearance of friendship, and is ushered in with great commendations; but the wound that is given may be deep and sure. Nevertheless, let whatever false reasons be given for this practice, it is always a breach of the great duty of charity; and it is a mark of little devotion, to tear in pieces the reputation of those that oppose our designs, and to think to make an agreeable offering to God of what we sacrifice, either to our interest, revenge, or to our jealous tempers. For except some instance of justice or charity require it, we ought not to expose our neighbour's real faults, because we are not willing that all that is true of ourselves should be exposed to publick view; and it is contrary to that love we owe to our neighbour, which should make us ready to cover and conceal all things that are defective in him, and which, if known, may tend to lessen that good name and reputation he hath obtained.

Let us therefore endeavour to divert such discourse, and discourage such sort of conversation, by all prudent means; as to urge what we can in our neighbour's vindication: but if the matter is too evident to be denied, we may endeavour to diminish the guilt of it, by imputing it to ignorance or surprise, or to the strength of temptation, and by owning that the best people might have found difficulties in such dangerous circumstances and temptations. And we must not shew any pleasure or satisfaction in what is related of our neighbour's prejudice, lest we encourage the detractor, and become partakers with him in his sin. But nothing is more necessary in order to master this reigning sin, than a firm resolution never to speak the least ill of any one; for whoever gives himself the liberty to publish the evil he knows of another, and talks with pleasure on such faults, tho' known by every body, may be likely to fall into real detractions. Because, where the power and corruption of nature is strong, it is difficult to stop; besides, by indulging small neglects we fortify our evil inclinations, and by degrees contract a habit of defamation, and exchange the amiable quality of sincerity for deceit and falsehood.

Means to prevent it.

This

*Of bearing
false witness.*

This should be well considered also, by those who make no scruple of *bearing false witness* against their neighbour in a court of justice, or wherever his person, property, or reputation may thereby be injured; such a one is the unrighteous witness; that sells himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord; whose crime increaseth in proportion to the evil done thereby to his neighbour, and therefore was forbid by God himself; and the offender is adjudged to suffer the same punishment he would by false witness and perjury have brought upon his neighbour. So that if we are called to give publick testimony between man and man, a sincere respect to truth will engage to a careful recollection, before we give our testimony upon the matter: it will dispose to lay aside affection on one hand, and prejudice on the other, and impartially to speak the whole truth, without disguise or concealment. For though we are not bound in every case to speak the whole truth; yet when a matter depends, in whole or in part, upon our evidence, we are bound not only to avoid all falshood, but also not to omit any thing which may give light to the true merits of the cause; for such concealment has the nature of a lye, because partial evidences may have the same evil effects as those evidences have, which are directly false. And,

Publick slanderers.

Let not those, that make a scruple to bear false witness where they think their neighbour directly concerned in his life, property, reputation or otherwise, yet make slight of violating truth in common conversation, and too frequently aggravate their slanders with *invidious railings* and *bitter reproaches*, think that they shall escape the judgment of God: for this, no less than the preceding injury of false witnessing, is threatned with the loss of heaven hereafter, as well as disqualifies them from the communion of Christ's church here upon earth. And though it be no ways aggravated, it would be well for those, who are guilty of such evil devices, to remember that if we hastily put an uncertain story out of our power by making it publick, we may prove false witnesses of a scandal, to many who take it upon our authority, without having inclination or opportunity to examine the grounds on which we told it.

Whispering.

Beside this, we should guard against that too common sin of *whispering*, or spreading any report to the disadvantage of our neighbour, under a pretence of enjoining secrecy; and that, God knows, not in regard to our neighbour, but to prevent ourselves from being discovered to be the authors thereof; and by that means of working in the dark, the slander like a secret poison becomes incurable, before the injured person can discern it: and therefore may justly be accounted one of the most incurable wounds of the tongue, undermining all society, and too frequently robbing families of their

peace,

peace, and innocent persons of their good name: it separateth chief friends; and therefore the tongue that is given to this wicked practice, may be properly said to be set on fire of hell.

Thus I have given you the nature and extent of this sin; and shall now shew you some of the steps towards it; and of the principal motives that should deter us from it's commission. And as in another case it is said, were there no receivers there would be no thieves; so did not men encourage tale-bearing and whispering, there would be no slanderers. And tho' we don't prompt them to this wickedness, yet if we are ready to credit slanderous reports, we encourage the wicked person, whose intention finishes in the breach of his neighbour's character. And therefore as such a one's accusation is no just ground of belief in us, so we are guilty of injustice to our neighbour to believe the reported evil. But if we not only believe, but scruple not to become a party in the slander, by publishing the same thing, and it may be with some addition, as a story that has been told us, we also incur the guilt, and are liable to the punishment of the whisperer. Then from the very nature and constitution of human society, there arises originally, in the reason of things, a strong argument why men ought to govern their words as well as their actions. For by the mutual intercourse of both human society is preserved; and by injurious speech, as well as by unjust actions, that general trust and confidence, that mutual charity and good-will are destroyed, on which depends the welfare and happiness of mankind. The constitution of every human society bears some resemblance to the frame of the natural body: and as in the natural body, all division, disagreement and disunion of the members, tends necessarily to the destruction and dissolution of the whole; so in proportion, in all communities and societies of men whatsoever, the contentions and animosities, the disorders and distractions arising from slander, calumny, detraction, uncharitableness, and other instances of licentious speech, are inevitably of very pernicious effect. And it is often of mischievous consequence to the person himself who indulgeth this folly. The wise authors of the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus express themselves clearly on this head: The ear of jealousy heareth all things, and the noise of whisperings is not hid: therefore refrain your tongue from backbiting; for there is no word so secret that shall go for nought, and the mouth that belyleth, slayeth the soul. He that can rule his tongue shall live without strife; and he that hateth babbling, shall have less evil: rehearse not unto another that which is told unto thee; and thou shalt fare never the worse: whether it be to a friend or a foe, talk not of other men's lives; and if thou canst without offence, reveal them not: for he heard and observed thee, and when time cometh he will hate thee; if thou hast heard

Several steps towards this sin.

Reasons against this vice.

a word, let it die with thee, and behold it will not burſt thee. The natural puniſhment therefore of a licentious and unbridled tongue, is the inconvenience it is very apt to bring, in the courſe of things, upon the perſon himſelf. This is the natural ill conſequence of this practice, to the perſons themſelves who are guilty of it. But the ſinfulneſs of it appears principally in the damage it does ſecretly to others. Slander and uncharitable defamation is a peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs, and a ſecret ſtab, againſt which there is many times no poſſibility of defence. Another and a more powerful motive to oblige men to reſtrain licentious ſpeech, is the conſideration of the inconfiſtency of it with a due ſenſe of religion. Therefore St. Paul reproveth with great ſeverity ſuch perſons as wander about from houſe to houſe, being tatlers, and buſy-bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not. And *laſtly*, another reaſon againſt calumny and detraction, is the conſideration of ourſelves being all of us ſubject to error. I ſpeak not here of the ill character which is, and ought to be given of all open vice and manifeſt unrighteouſneſs. But men, who have different notions and apprehenſions of things, are very apt to caſt reproach upon each other, not for their vices, but for their different underſtandings. And the ſame frailty, which in a man of the ſame ſect or party ſhall be no blemiſh at all, ſhall, in a perſon of a different party, be the moſt unpardonable crime. But the greater and ſtill more inexcusable degree of this partiality is, when men caſt reproach and contempt upon others, for what is truly commendable, for doing what perhaps was their duty to do; for being wiſer or more charitable, or more ſcrupulous and conſcientious than themſelves. Our Saviour forbids this cenſoriousneſs towards others, under the penalty of being more ſtrictly judged ourſelves; Judge not, that ye be not judged. And concerning opprobrious and reproachful language to a man's face, he ſays, Whoſoever ſhall ſay unto his brother, Thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell-fire: much more againſt malicious backbiting and uncharitable detraction, would he have uſed the like ſeverity of expreſſion. The reaſon is, becauſe ſuch kind of detraction and defamation is really more injurious and more difficult to be guarded againſt, and of more extenſive effect, than any other ways of doing wrong to our neighbour. I ſhall conclude therefore with that declaration of our Lord, Matt. xii. 36. I ſay unto you, that every idle word (that is, every malicious word) that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned. And

Of ſcoffing.

Therefore let us not only avoid the more groſs means of ſlander, but alſo take care never to ſtrike at a man's reputation, by *deſpiſing* and *ſcoffing* him; eſpecially, if another ſhould be encouraged from thence alſo to ſcorn and ſcoff

scoff at thy neighbour, either on account of some human infirmities, providential calamities, or even for his very sins; for in so doing we do him a great injustice. For,

If we scoff at him for the deformity of his body, disagreeableness of his face, the folly or weakness of his understanding; we lay that to his charge which he cannot help, and at the same time impeach the wisdom and justice of God, who thought good to deny him those excellencies of the body and mind. And

The same reason forbids us to reproach any person for those afflictions of body and mind, which are accidental to all men under the providence of God, who for wise, just, and good reasons, correcteth the children of men when and how he sees proper: and therefore we ought not to judge what are his motives for so doing, but search our own hearts and repent, lest our sins may deserve the like punishment; and instead of persecuting them whom God hath smitten, and talking how to grieve them whom he hath wounded, we should well consider how our Saviour reproves such evil practices: Suppose ye, says he to the censorious Jews, that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

In fine, whatever we ourselves are subject to, should never be the subject of our derision in another: So that the very sins of our neighbours are no just excuse of our contempt and scoffing; but instead of reproach they should excite our compassion; because, if we have not fallen into the same or the like faults, it is not our own strength, but God's more especial grace, that preserves us. Therefore, upon the whole, he that would insinuate any thing from such cases to his neighbour's disadvantage, is guilty of great injustice to his credit,

In which he robs him of what is most valuable in this life; and for which, it may be, he can never make sufficient restitution: for, Where shall we go to recal our invidious speeches? Or, how is it possible to suppose, that all who have heard our slanders before, shall either hear, or be willing to believe, our publick recantations? And if that cannot be certain, it is certain we can have no assurance of having repaired the injury done to our neighbour's reputation. Though

We are obliged, by all the laws of God and man, to do all in our power to restore that good name we have blasted; or we cannot hope that God will pardon us, whose eyes are open to, and will punish every wicked thought, as well as deeds and words, Therefore

For infirmities.

For calamities.

For sins.

Destroying the credit a great and irreparable injury.

Men must endeavour to repair the injury.

Justice in the thoughts.

To conclude this point of negative justice, let me exhort you not so much as to wish or think evil of your neighbour; for, the same law that forbids us to hurt, commands us to love, and not to hate, envy, or wish any evil even to our enemies. So that notwithstanding we bridle our tongue, and lend no hand in any violent oppression of our neighbour, we stand guilty before God for every malicious desire or pleasure we take at his misfortunes. Keep thy heart, says Solomon, with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life: because none but the pure in heart shall see God.

Positive justice.

V. Having largely shewn, in the foregoing particulars, how a man may do an injury to his neighbour; I shall now proceed to that which divines call *positive* JUSTICE; or giving that to our neighbour, which he of right can demand of us as his due. And therefore I shall consider this branch of justice, *first*, as it regards all men in general; and *then*, as it respects each in his proper station of life. Thus

Speaking truth to all men.

Truth, must take place in all our promises and engagements; because, where we were at full liberty before, promises oblige us, and give our neighbour a right; and we should never allow ourselves to make them, unless there be an intention to put them in execution. Therefore before any one resolves, let him thoroughly consider the matter he resolves upon, and of the arguments that may be urged for and against it. Let him consider his own temper and humour when he doth resolve. Let him make his resolutions as particular as may be; not only resolving upon the end, but upon the means likewise of attaining that end. And above all, let him be prudent in his resolutions, and not burthen himself with unnecessary promises or engagements. So to engage to do a thing

Promise nothing out of thy power.

when we cannot accomplish it, or have it not in our intention, is really to injure our neighbour, and to wrong our own souls at the last day. And as we must be supposed to promise what we are able to perform, and what we suppose to be lawful: so if it appears otherwise, we must repent of our rashness, and not add sin to sin, by executing a rash unlawful act. Hence it is plain that no promise can be made in bar of all future contingencies, nor release a man from that which the providence of God makes much more his duty. In short, it is to speak as we think, to do what we pretend and profess, to perform what we promise, and really to be what we would seem and appear to be to all about us. Yet this no way implies, that we are obliged to tell every man all our mind; but that we must never declare any thing contrary thereto. We may conceal as much of ourselves as prudence, or any other good reason, requires; but we must not put on a disguise, and make a false appearance and empty shew

of what we are not, either by word or deed. I fear most of that compliment, which is current in conversation, is contrary to this virtue; because, for the most part, it is nothing but words, to fill up the gaps, and supply the emptiness of discourse; and a pretence of that kindness and esteem for persons, which either in truth we have not, or not to that degree which our expressions seem to import; which, if done with design, is that which we call flattery: a very odious sort of insincerity, and so much the worse, because it abuses men into a vain and foolish opinion of themselves, and an ill-grounded confidence of the kindness and good-will of others towards them; and therefore sinful. Civility is fit to be professed and practised to all, but profession of respect and esteem is another thing; and when there is nothing to answer it, it is inconsistent with the candour and simplicity of a disciple of Christ. Commendations given to men, which we think they do not deserve, or flattering them upon excellencies they are not possessed of, if they pass with us for words of course now, will not pass so easily in the day of the Lord. So

Speaking every one truth with his neighbour, has ever been acknowledged, by men of all conditions, to be our necessary and indispensable duty. Heathens, as well as christians, men of all ranks and professions, of all sects and religions whatever, have agreed in this, that there is an eternal obligation founded in the nature of things, which every man that attends to the dictates of his reason and conscience cannot but own and be sensible of, that our words should be agreeable to our thoughts; and have been sensible that *lying*, or endeavouring to deceive each other, is a base and mean practice, unworthy the dignity of a rational creature, and highly displeasing to God, who has given us the use of that noble faculty of speech for this very end, that it might be the interpreter of our thoughts to each other. The proper notion of a lye therefore is an endeavouring to deceive another, by signifying that to him as true, which we ourselves think not to be so, in the ordinary way of communicating our thoughts, even though they should be signified by nods and gestures. And again, if a man thinks a thing not to be true, and yet declares it to another as certain; though in the event the thing should chance to prove true, yet since he knew it not, and believed it not to be so, his act is still the same, and may properly be called a lye. Wherefore God expresseth himself highly offended with those that practise lying and falshood, and proclaims a detestation of them; Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. Put away lying, says the apostle; lye not one to another; but let every man speak truth with his neighbour. We who worship the God of truth, ought to speak truth; to use plainness and sincerity in all our words, to abhor falshood and dissimulation.

mulation, and those more refined ways of lying by *equivocation* of words and secret *reservation* of our minds, on purpose to deceive the innocent. In a word, that man who can dispense with himself as to moral duties, who makes no conscience of a lye, or breaking his word; what badge soever he may wear, what title soever he may call himself by, it is as impossible that such a man should be a true christian, as it is to reconcile the God of truth and the father of lyes. Yet as all untruth

*How a lye
may be re-
peated.*

cannot be properly reduced under this sin, let it be observed, that it is no lye to repeat a known falshood in the way of a narrative, if a man mentions it not as his own sense, but declares it to be false at the same time. And if a sick person would refuse a medicine, likely to be of service to him, if he was acquainted what it was, a physician, a parent or a friend, may lawfully endeavour to deceive him by any method consistent with truth: Or if a matter be in trusted with me as a secret, and another would fain discover it, who has no right to know it; if by silence, or by a partial but true account, I can divert his inquiry, it will be no falshood. But it is not lawful to lye for God, or for the greatest advantage to our neighbours or our selves: for, lying in any kind is a violation of truth, which the best end cannot justify; because we must not do evil, that good may come. Therefore, though *facetious* lyes may not be a direct

Of jocular lyes.

breach upon charity, yet they are upon truth, and weaken men's regard for it: and though such inventions may produce some mirth and entertainment for the company; yet they can give none in the reflection applied to ourselves: and upon reflection they only gain us the reputation of impertinent lyars.

*The great com-
monness and
folly of this sin.*

Is it not strange then, that a man is scarce to be found that speaketh truth from his heart; as if neither God nor man were able to find him out? But as it is a common observation, there are few lyars but at some times discover their own folly, and thereby become the contempt and reproach of all sober and well-meaning men; and as no arts or craftiness can hide it from God, who seeth the heart, and knoweth our thoughts long before; and as he is the God of truth, will certainly punish it, as he has promised, with fire and brimstone: so if any one would live comfortably and creditably here, and avoid God's vengeance hereafter, he must put away lying upon any account whatever. And

*Courteous be-
haviour due
to all men.*

Not only truth, but *courtesy* or good behaviour, is due to all men, from the highest to the lowest station of life: because a crabbed morose temper is more the resemblance of a brute, than an indication of a rational creature. Yet

The

The proud and ambitious man, who looks down with a pharisaical disdain upon his fellow-creatures, and refuses common civility to other men, should remember, that the Lord maketh us all, both high and low, rich and poor, and can humble him that exalteth himself. And I scarce know, in any one instance, where men so generally concur to execute God's providence, as in pulling down those mighty men who had used them contemptuously, when God begins to visit them with adversity.

Not paid by the proud man.

We must also treat our neighbour with meekness. Be patient, says the apostle, towards all men; never rewarding evil for evil, or railing for railing, no not in our zeal for the cause of religion: because meekness of heart is a condition, without which we cannot be admitted into the presence of God. And

Meekness a due to all men.

Without this virtue there can neither be peace, good neighbourhood, love, nor affection, in any kingdom, state, or family; because an angry *brawling* man can neither be a good friend nor companion: wherefore Solomon advises us, not to make friendship with an angry man, and not to go with a furious man; and declares, It is better to dwell in a wilderness than with a contentious and an angry woman. And whoever rightly considers what our Saviour says, that such a one is in danger of hell-fire, cannot easily give way to this sin, which is too often attended with horrid oaths, cursings, execrations, and blasphemies: and as this is the language of hell, they that use it cannot be fit for heaven. Therefore take the advice of the apostle; Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

Brawling very insufferable.

It leads to cursing.

VI. Excellency in any thing or person is the gift of God, and demands it's proper praise and honour: so he who excels another, hath a right to be preferred before him in the esteem and value of the world; to have his light reflected with more splendour, and his excellencies resounded with higher applauses. So that he who, out of a conceited opinion of his own excellencies, detains from a worthy person those acknowledgments that are due to his virtues, robs virtue itself of one of her fairest jewels; strips off her garments of praise, and buries her alive: and therefore, since to rob a virtuous person of his honour and reputation is so great an outrage to virtue itself, it also must needs be highly unjust and dishonest. Again, the great iniquity of detraction and of lessening or debasing men's deserved praises and commendations through envy, is injurious to God, who may do what he will with his own, and is a higher injustice to man than to pick his pocket: for he that clips a man's honour, robs him of his best and dearest property; and whilst he sucks the veins of another's reputation,

Respect due to men of extraordinary gifts.

putation, to put colour into the cheeks of his own, he lives upon the spoils of his neighbour; and is every whit as injurious to him, as if he should pull down his house, to build himself another by the ruins thereof.

We are not to envy them. Nevertheless, this unrighteous practice is common; not considering that this *envying* at God's kindness to others, is in effect a murmuring against him: for one cannot oppose him more, than by hating and doing evil to a man, because God hath loved him and done well to him; nor in respect to the man can there be any thing more irrational than to love him the less, merely because he is endued with those qualities, for which in reason and justice I ought to love him the more; and yet this groveling serpent lurks almost in every hedge. Therefore

Nor detract from them. We must not strive to *lessen* those excellencies in the opinion of others; for nothing does more truly discover our murmuring and envy, than to endeavour to ruin the credit of any thing in another's esteem: yet this is the case of all those, who would deny either the kinds or degrees of his neighbour's extraordinary gifts or graces, by speaking slightly of them, or by endeavouring to cloud them with a malicious report of some other real or pretended infirmity of his, which like dead flies, as the preacher writes, may corrupt the savour of the ointment.

The folly of both these sins. The *folly* of this sin of envy appears in the pain and torment it exposes a man to, and in his being deprived by it of those advantages which he might reap from such extraordinary gifts of his neighbour, whether they be wisdom or learning, piety or virtue. And the folly of detraction is no less manifest, because it seldom fails of being discovered; then the consequence is certain, the *detractor* lessens his own character, and the neighbour he intended to injure obtains more esteem for those excellencies, which were the object of the other's envy. And,

Respect due to men of rank and quality. As for the several degrees of nobility, titles and places of dignity, by which men are advanced above the vulgar class of mankind, they are so many marks and badges of honour. It is true, by virtue of this titular dignity we are no farther obliged to reverence or esteem men, than their wisdom or virtue deserves; yet we are bound to give them their *due titles*, and demean ourselves towards them with that *outward* preference, observance, and ceremony, which their degree and quality requires, on account of that lawful authority, which has raised them to that state and condition of life. Wherefore, as titular dignities intitle

Due to the rich. men to an outward respect and observance, so also doth wealth and large possessions; for, when God bestows upon one man a larger fortune and possession than

on another, he doth thereby prefer and advance him into an higher sphere and condition; and when God hath set him above us, it is just and fit that we should rise and give that place to him which is of God's appointment. Tho' it may be a wise or virtuous poor man hath more right to our esteem than a fortunate knave or fool; yet, forasmuch as in outward rank and condition God hath preferred the latter, he hath the rights of precedency, and of outward respect and observance, and ought to be treated with greater regard and obeisance. This is a duty so incumbent upon all, that our church has thought proper to teach it in her first rudiments of christianity; where children are taught *to order themselves lowly and reverently to all their betters.*

Again, if our neighbour be in want of know- *Due to those*
ledge, comfort, counsel, advice or reproof, or in *that are in*
want of our defence, we are, according to our a- *any want.*
bility, which God has given us for that purpose,
not only to demand their respect, but to assist others when they
are ignorant, in affliction, drawn into sin, and under the defama-
tion of an evil tongue.

Thus also when the necessities of the *poor* call *To the poor.*
upon us, we must relieve their bodily wants with
a plentiful contribution of our purse, as due to them from that
treasure which God has committed in trust to our charge: For,
in all these cases we are to look upon ourselves only as God's
stewards, and so ought to dread the punishment of the unjust
steward, and the loss of those abilities, which God has a right to
take from them, that do not faithfully employ *By God's ap-*
them to the ends for which they were given 'em; *pointment.*
for the with-holding from the poor more than
is meet tends to poverty.

A *third* qualification, which makes any thing we possess due
to our neighbour, is that degree of *relation*, which *Duties in re-*
is between *debtor* and *creditor*, whereby we are o- *spect of relation-*
bliged to pay justly what we owe by bargain,
loan, or promise, as I have more largely shewn before.

VII. He also who doth a good turn, deserves *Gratitude to*
and merits of him that receives it; and he hath a *benefactors.*
right to what he deserves. Consequently, every
receiver is debtor to his *benefactor*, whether spiritual or corpo-
ral. And he must not only acknowledge the benefit received,
and pray to God for him; but he owes him, when he hath op-
portunity, a suitable return. And though my benefactor gives
me his benefit freely, as having no need of it himself, or not so
much as I, and therefore cannot legally demand a repayment of
it; yet whatsoever he gives me, he deserves of me; and if ever
circumstances change, and he hath my need, and I his ability, I
am in conscience as much obliged to repay it, as if he had lent
it me upon legal security; because in this case my ability is secu-
rity

rity for the benefit I owe him, and his need is a just demand of it; and since what he hath merited of me is his due, I am unjust, if I do not repay him so far as I am able, when his necessity requires it. Yet if either I am not able to repay him, or he hath no occasion for it, I am in justice to express my gratitude in thankful acknowledgments, and, by all the services I can render him, to express a willingness to make him a full return. Thus as in matter of debt, he, who cannot pay all, must compound and pay so far as he is able; so in the matter of benefits, he who cannot make a compleat requital, is obliged in justice to make some composition, and pay so much as his ability extends to; and if he can do no more, to give thankful words for benefits received, which generous benefactors esteem the noblest return: so he who receives benefits without some thankful acknowledgment, acts the part of a swine, that greedily devours the acorns, and never looks up towards the tree from whence they drop: and he who requites benefits with injuries, acts the part of him, who would fain have thrown that blessed Being out of heaven, who created and placed him therein.

SUNDAY XII.

- I. *Of charity or love to our NEIGHBOUR's soul and body, as it respects our affections, shewing the effects, motives and pleasantness of this duty; and II. As it respects our actions, shewing in what cases, and how to admonish the vicious, and how to behave towards those that are sick, in prison, or persecuted; with a caution to those who prosecute an offender, go to law, or imprison an insolvent debtor. III. Of charity to men's goods, including almsgiving; with the manner, object, proportion, and reward of that duty. IV. Of charity to our NEIGHBOUR's credit, with rules to perform it; including, V. Peace-making, going to law, and loving our enemies.*

Charity. I. **T**HE second general branch of duty to our neighbour is CHARITY: For charity, or the love of our neighbours, which consists in doing all good offices, and shewing kindness towards our neighbour both in our affections and in our actions, is a duty to which we are disposed by the frame of our nature, and our inclination to society, in which there can be no pleasure nor advantage, without mutual love and compassion. This is the best expression of love towards God, since our neighbour is God's creature and his image, and the object of his love and mercy. And this is the particular command of our blessed Saviour, urged upon his disciples so earnestly, as if he required nothing else in comparison thereof. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. This is the proper badge and cognizance of the christian profession; by which the disciples of Jesus were to be distinguished

guished from the disciples of any other profession; so that in the beginning of christianity this virtue was so well practised, that the very heathens would admire and say, Behold how these christians love one another: For though this commandment may be supposed to have some foundation in nature, yet it is by our Lord and Saviour so much enlarged, as to the object of it, having extended it to all mankind; so greatly advanced, as to the extent of it, even to the laying down our lives for one another; so effectually taught, so mightily encouraged, so very much urged and insisted upon, that it may very well be called a new commandment; for though it was not altogether unknown to mankind before, yet it was never taught in this manner, nor so much stress laid upon it by any other appointment. Therefore by this, Christ saith, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

The charity of our *affections* disposes us to love our neighbour in such a manner, that if he be virtuous, it will make us esteem him; if he be honest, but weak in judgment, it will raise pity and succour; if he be wicked, it will incline us to pious admonition in order to reclaim him; if he receives good, it will make us rejoice; if he receives evil which we cannot redress, it will make us take pity on him; if we can, it will make us relieve him by supplying his necessities or by hiding his disgrace, if it be deserved, which is concealing our neighbour's defects; and by wiping it off, where it is not deserved, which is vindicating his reputation or good name. When he is our inferior, it will make us affable and courteous; if our equal, it will make us candid, and ready to maintain a good correspondence; if our superior, respectful and submissive; if we receive good from him, it will make us thankful, and desirous to requite it; if we receive evil, it will make us slow to anger, easy to be intreated, ready to forgive, long-suffering and merciful when we are justly angry.

In which description of charity towards our neighbours is included a desire to do all the good in our power to their *souls, bodies, goods, and credit*. And, *first*, This should make us concerned for the salvation of their souls, and put us upon means to recover them from a state of sin and unbelief. The *next* branch of charity is regarding the *bodies* of men, to which we are to wish all health and welfare. Wherefore observe, that although natural blemishes and defects, such as lameness or crookedness, the want of our senses, or the disproportion of our parts or features, render our bodies less useful, or less graceful and lovely, and do not only upbraid us to ourselves, but create a contemptible opinion of us in the minds of others, the suspicion of which is apt to grieve and afflict our minds; charity requires us not to condemn men, nor to upbraid

In the affections.

To the souls of men.

To their bodies, goods, and credit.

upbraid or reproach them upon the account of any bodily infirmity; but to render them all respect, which the graces and virtues of their minds are worthy of. The body is not the man, but the immortal mind that inhabits it; even as many times the richest diamonds wear the roughest coats. So that such natural blemishes are infelicities, which men cannot prevent nor rectify; and therefore to deride and expose them for any blemish in their composition, is to sling salt into their wounds, to fret and inflame their miserable condition. Nor must our desires for our neighbour's welfare stop here; for whoever does not wish that his neighbour's *goods* and *credit* may thrive and prosper, can never be said to love his neighbour as himself.

The effects of this charity.

So when the love of God secures our own duty: when it makes us earnestly concerned, that all the world should be influenced by the same divine flame, and that our neighbour should become a fit object of infinite mercy: when we are sensibly touched with the blindness and obstinacy of wicked christians; and endeavour by the properest methods to cure their ignorance, and to remove their great indifference as to the business of religion: when we are careful to propose and establish the rules of piety in our families, and among our friends and relations: when our discourse and conversation are edifying: when we recommend it by our own example, and by our prayers; for the conversion of sinners, and for the perseverance of the righteous: when we conceal all things that may offend the weak, and publish whatever may tend to increase the love of virtue: when we take all occasions to praise those that live well, to honour them before the world, and to give them the preference in those favours we are able to confer: when the civilities and liberalities we exercise, and the friendships we contract, aim at the recovering the soul from evil ways, and improving it in what is good: when the comfort and relief we give to the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, tend to make the design of God's providence towards them effectual for their amendment, if they are bad; or for their improvement if they are good; that they may learn to adore the Author of their afflictions, and wisely fix their minds upon a good that is stable and permanent; then shall we be sure that we act like disciples of Christ, and that the Holy Ghost has added zeal to our charity; especially when it is observed to be dealt towards all men without respect of persons.

It casts out envy.

This will not only cast out *envy*; for, as the apostle saith, Charity envieth not, will not suffer us to grudge and repine at another's good: But it also conquers *pride* and a haughty mind; for charity vaunteth

Pride.

not itself, is not puffed up; whoever therefore vilifies or disdains his neighbour, breaks the command, and forfeits his right to the discipleship of Christ. Put on therefore, says the apostle, bowels of mercies, kindness and humbleness

bleness of mind, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.

It also casteth out *censoriousness* and *rash-judging*; for charity thinketh no evil of our neighbour's words or actions; and believeth nothing but what is good of him; and hopeth all things for his welfare and credit. So that it is the want of this virtue, that maketh place for unmerciful censures and rash judgments. Again, charity is *without dissimulation*; disdaineth to speak a man fair to his face, and injure him behind his back, and despiseth all little arts and contrivances for *private* gain and advantage, which must rise upon the injury of our neighbour. In a word,

Censoriousness.

Dissembling.

Self-seeking.

Where this christian virtue reigns there can be no *malice* nor desire of *revenge*; for it beareth all things, let them be never so injurious, opposing prayers and blessings to the hottest persecutors, and leaving the issue and vengeance to the Lord, with a full assurance that he will never suffer his servants to be rooted out.

Revenge.

Now this duty of charity must be expressed to the innocent and the guilty, we must forgive those that offend us; which forgiveness to *enemies*, peculiar to christians, consists in bearing a sincere affection towards them, though they are malicious and implacable. Christians deceive themselves, if they think it is enough not to wish evil, and to do no harm; for, we are obliged to be ready to forgive them, and to remove all misunderstandings. Where let it be observed, that forgiveness is chiefly taken for abstaining from revenge; and so far we are to forgive our enemies, even whilst they continue so; and tho' they do not repent of the evil done to us, we must also pray for them, and do them all kind and humane offices. Again, forgiveness doth signify a perfect reconciliation to those that have offended us, so as to take them again into our friendship, which they are by no means fit for, till they have repented of their hatred; and this is the meaning of that text, of rebuking our brother if he trespass against us, and if he repent to forgive him; which is, according to St. Paul's direction, to forgive others, even as God for Christ's sake forgiveth us. And which we are enjoined by the express command of our Saviour, who hath made forgiveness of injuries the condition without which we can expect no pardon of our sins: and hath in his own person set us a pattern of this virtue, which he practised to the height, rendering good for evil to all the world. Moreover, it tends to the comfort and happiness of our lives; patience and forgiveness affording a lasting and solid pleasure, in that they restrain tumultuous and unreasonable passions, and prevent many troubles, which flow from a

To be extended even to enemies.

Motives thereunto.

The command of Christ, &c.

temper that is malicious and revengeful. Our goodness is then perfected when we do kindnesses not only without merit and obligation, but in defiance of temptation to dissuade us from it. By such a practice we discover a great mind; obtain the most valuable conquest; because gained over our own passions, and shew ourselves to be the image of that God; who is affected towards those, who are guilty of the greatest provocations against his divine Majesty. Therefore considering all these motives, ought we not to infer with the apostle, Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another, especially as our pardon before God depends so much upon our forgiving our enemies?

The example of God.

Which is again enforced by a *third* consideration of the difference of our sins against God, and of our neighbour's offences against ourselves. And, in this comparison, let us consider the

The disproportion of our offences against God and of men's against us.

infinite Majesty of God; and the equality of human nature in every station; and this will dictate that we owe a perfect obedience to our maker, as the God of all power and might; whereas all powers amongst men are ordained of God. So all that we enjoy of the necessities, comforts or satisfactions of life, are out of the abundance of his goodness and mercy; and they that don't thankfully acknowledge his free gifts are guilty of the greatest ingratitude; an ingratitude no ways applicable to men, because they differ as much as time and eternity. And *lastly*, we never sin, but we break God's commands and offend him; but the most envious and malicious person can never find those frequent opportunities to offend his fellow creature. Which disproportion of our offences against God and man is excellently described in the parable of the Lord, who forgave his servant ten thousand talents, and of that same servant that would not forgive his fellow servant one hundred pence.

Pleasantness of this duty.

These considerations may still be heightened by that *pleasure*, which they feel who are constant in the practice of this great duty; and whose delight may be discerned even at a distance, by comparing it with the disgrace and uneasiness, which it's contraries, revenge and malice, constantly produce, both to our bodies and minds. As also by the manifest and dreadful hazard they run, never to be pardoned of God, who forgive not those that have offended them; and *lastly*, in consideration of that thankfulness to God and Christ, who of his free grace sent his beloved Son to die for us his enemies, and (having brought us into a capacity of happiness) expects such returns as his love exemplifies and demands.

The first rising of rancour, &c. so he suppressed.

All which considerations will effectually take place in those minds where the *first beginnings* of rancour, malice and revenge are opposed and stifled; and without this care neither those, nor any

any other motives to christian charity, can ever find a place in the heart: because these rather serve to prevent than to cure the wound.

Thus I have done with that part of christian *charity*, which regards our *affections* towards our neighbour: Therefore

II. In the *next* place, I shall treat of the CHARITY of our *actions*: for as St. James teacheth in regard to faith, our cold love is dead, if we do not approve our hearts before God by such works of mercy as shall convince our neighbour, that we sincerely desire the good of his soul, body, goods, and credit. *Charity in the actions.*
As I said before that the soul of man has a natural signification, so now I observe again, That the *mind* of man is in that sense understood, to which not only our good wishes are to extend, but whenever our neighbour's mind is oppressed with any heaviness, we must endeavour to comfort and refresh him, by all the christian counsel and advice we are able. *Towards the mind of our neighbour.* And

If the *soul*, in it's more noble and spiritual acceptance, be cast down with any dreadful or despairing thoughts, we are still more concerned to attempt our neighbour's support: Or if our neighbour does wilfully run into sin, we must do what lies in our power, in person, or by other proper means, to reclaim him from the evil of his ways: and though they should all prove ineffectual, we must not cease to pray and even to weep in secret for him; because he keeps not God's law; and because he will not know the things that belong to his peace; for such a neglect is a sin: therefore says Samuel, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you; when he could not dissuade the people from their evil courses. *His soul.*

The *body* must also partake of our charity: as St. James likewise observes, If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit, either the afflicted or our own souls? for, let that man whose charity only shews itself in his lips, recollect that our Saviour requires the relieving of our neighbour's bodily wants, as a necessary part of our duty; and promises to make it a part of his inquiry at the judgment in the last day; and upon those, that wilfully omit it, he has already pronounced that dreadful sentence, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. Therefore let us endeavour to escape that dreadful judgment, by exercising our charity according to these general heads, at least, set down in the same chapter, by giving meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, harbouring the stranger, cloathing the naked, *Charity in respect to the body.*

ked, and visiting the sick, and imprisoned : that is to say, we must lay hold on all opportunities to assist our necessitous brethren, and with the good Samaritan, make no distinction of nation or party, but do all the good in our power, and look upon every object, as a call from heaven to put our pious intentions in practice. Wherefore

Reproof and admonition.

Charity towards our neighbour requires us, when we see an obstinate sinner, to give him seasonable *reproofs* and tender *admonitions*, to reclaim him from his evil conversation. Yet this merciful work of admōnition ought to be managed with caution : * if the person we reprove be out of our power, we ought to forbear him till his passion is down, till his mind is calm and easy ; whoever re-proves a man, when disordered by passion or intemperance, preaches patience to the wind, which, the more he endeavours to resist, the louder it will storm. When one is fit to receive a reprehension, we ought to give it with the greatest privacy : if he offend in publick, where there are witnesses, unless the matter be highly scandalous, it is sufficient that we express our dislike of it by our looks and the seriousness of our behaviour, and afterwards shew the folly and danger of his sin in private ; to reprove men publickly, looks more like malice than mercy ; especially till we have first made trial of private reproofs ; and found them unsuccessful. Nor with our reproofs ought we to mingle

How to be given.

lightness or drollery, nor passions nor upbraidings ; but to perform this merciful office with modesty, seriousness and compassion ; to reprove a man lightly or passionately, derides and reproaches him for his sin, but never reclaims him from it. Again we ought to reprove him for matters culpable, not to reprehend him for any innocent freedom ; not for every trifling indecency, but only for plain and unquestionable trespasses upon religion ; lest he should look upon our reproofs as the language of a proud and ill-natured temper ; but rather represent that a vicious state doth weaken and disable men's faculties, impair the health and vigour of their minds, and that for their recovery it is necessary, that their thoughts should be fixed on a consideration of the evil and danger of their sins, and of the blessed hopes which God hath set before them, to renounce and forsake them. And since we see so many sorrowful instances every day amongst men, who in their sober thoughts will lament their follies, and blush in the morning when they

In case of intemperance.

remember how their brains were set on float by their last night's intemperance ; who yet, when the next temptation beckons them again, return as greedily to it as ever ; and though when they have repented of their sin, they resolve against it, yet when they are tempted,

sin

* See the duty of a friend in pages 170, 171, 172, 173.

in again, and call themselves miserable: we in this case particularly are bound in mercy to recommend their condition to the God of all grace and compassion, to beseech him to take pity on their weakness, and with the out-stretched arm of his grace to touch their dead souls, and raise them up into a thorough conversion; and tho' in all cases of misery, prayer is a proper work of mercy, yet there is none that so much needs our prayers as this.

Charity requires us to render to our neighbours, friends and acquaintance, who through *sickness, imprisonment, persecution,* or any other misfortune have need of our assistance, such good offices as do conduce to their support or recovery; and if their *sickness* be such as will safely admit of conversation, we are obliged to visit them, to cheer their drooping spirits and sorrowful hours with godly conversation, and to administer the supports and comforts of religion; to awaken their minds into serious thoughts and purposes; to resolve their doubts; to comfort and support them with the hopes of glory, and to take all opportunities to prepare their souls for a happy death; that so, whether they recover or no, this sickness of their bodies may contribute to their souls health; and if they are poor and indigent, to supply them with such remedies as are necessary to their health and recovery.

When a man is *in prison*, he is in a sort of captivity. Is it not a calamitous condition for a man to be shut up in a close and unwholesome goal; to dwell with hunger and cold, confined to hard lodging and wretched companions, to be with-held from the conversation of friends, from the comforts of diversion, and from business and employment, and all opportunities of making provision for his family in distress? Therefore it is our duty towards these unfortunate men, to visit them in this their uncomfortable imprisonment, if they are our friends and acquaintance; and to divert their sorrows, to strengthen their hopes, and to cheer them with assurances of friendship; to use endeavours to mollify their adversaries, to vindicate their innocence, or to compound with their creditors, if they are not able to discharge their debts. And whether they are our friends or acquaintance or no, charity obliges us, as we have opportunity and ability, to relieve their necessities, to redress their injuries, to contribute to their enlargements, that they may by their honest industry make provision for those, who depend on their honest endeavours. But,

Those who are *unjustly persecuted* for conscience sake, who, to secure their souls, are forced to fly, or to submit to spoil and plunder, to imprisonment and famine and death, are of all others the greatest objects of our mercy; because they suffer for our common Master, and in our common cause. Therefore if we have any compassion, by what more suitable acts can we express it, than by a kind re-

In sickness.

In case of imprisonment.

In case of persecution.

ception of those, when they fly to us for succour, and a liberal contribution towards their relief and subsistence, and by assisting those with the charity of our prayers, whom we cannot reach with the charity of our alms; by remembering those that are in bonds, to pity and pray for them, and if it were in our power, to visit and relieve them, as being bound with them, and also to remember those that suffer adversity, as being ourselves also in the body? And,

How to prosecute an offender.

If it should fall to our lot at any time to prosecute an offender in a just cause, we must remember, that though injuries do give us a right to punish the offender by course of law, or by our own power, when at our own disposal; yet, because men's souls are out of the reach of human punishments, we can exact no other penalties of offenders, but such as affect their bodies with shame or pain, with loss of goods, with wearisome labour or confinement; which punishment is an act of mercy, more than an act of revenge, the end of it being to do good, rather than to return evil for evil: therefore seeing that the end of punishment is doing good, it ought to be executed with a kind intention; not to discharge our rage, or recreate our malice, but to vindicate our right, or reclaim the offender, or terrify others by his punishment. Consequently in lighter injuries, suppose a man should give me the lye, or call me names, or abuse me with reproachful language, mercy requires me to remit and forgive the fault, and not to strike and wound him, nor rigidly by a vexatious suit at law to exact the hurt of the offender for such trifling offences as do me no harm.

A debtor.

Again, put the case I have an *insolvent debtor*, that owes me a great deal, and can pay me nothing, and it is in my power, according to the letter of the law, to cast him into prison, and force him to languish away his wretched life; to what end shall I inflict this punishment? I cannot hope to recover my own by this means; for a prison will pay no debts, as every body must know. Can I pretend to reform him by it? No; for prisons are fruitful nurseries of all evil. Neither can I warn others by it; for what warning can oblige men to do that which is not in their power?

Who are unmerciful.

Hence observe that he is an *unmerciful creditor*, who, rather than abate the least part of his due, will strip his poor debtor to the skin, and reduce him to the utmost extremity: and he is an *unmerciful punisher* that exacts to the full desert of the fault, and stretches his right of punishing to the utmost extent, to make the offender miserable, without any service to himself or to the publick. In a word, mercy requires us to follow the great example of God, who, in the midst of justice doth always remember mercy; who makes large abatements of his right to punish us, and never exacts the utmost punishment which our iniquities require. Wherefore

fore we are obliged in punishing others to mingle mercy with our severities, and proportionably to the offender's penitence, or the pitiable circumstances of his fault, or the necessities of his present condition, to make a favourable allowance. Again,

III. This CHARITY is to be shewn towards the goods of our neighbour, whether he be rich or poor, by assisting and furthering him in all honest ways to improve and to preserve them. *Charity in respect of goods.* Thus,

If our *rich* neighbour is likely to suffer loss, we are not to permit it, if in our power any ways to prevent it; and we must take all opportunities to advance his profit, when it does not lessen our own substance. But, *Towards the rich.*

If our *poor* neighbour calls upon our charity, we must freely part with our own to supply his necessities; for, as St. John saith, Who so hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? *Towards the poor.*

If we see our brother have need, pinched with hunger, or parched with drought, his hungry family crying for want of bread, and none to give them; children shivering with cold, and drooping with famine, and without any view of relief; whilst their pined carcases are covered with rags, and more destitute than the beasts of the field, and birds of the air, for want of proper shelter where to lay their heads; then we are obliged by charity to a tender sympathy, to affect our souls with a compassionate sense of the wants of our poor brethren, and represent their condition as if it were our own. Therefore to relieve the poor is declared by the apostle to be a sacrifice wherewith God is well pleased, and accepted by him. And consequently the church of Christ has always joined it, as a proper part of a christian's duty, to the administration of the Lord's supper, where, among many other such-like scriptural exhortations, we are commanded to do good, and to distribute not to forget. Tho' indeed, if we ourselves are poor and needy, we are not obliged to pinch ourselves or families to relieve the necessities of others; for the desire of self-preservation being of all others the most vehement passion in our natures, God doth thereby not only warrant, but directs us to take care of ourselves, and not to sacrifice the means of our own preservation to the necessities of our neighbours. And,

As the obligations we are continually under to practise this duty, are great and numerous, it may be useful to distinguish them into their proper heads, as they rise from the consideration either of GOD, our neighbour, or ourselves. And with respect to God, Is it not the thing that he has chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo

undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free : And that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thy own flesh? Nothing is more agreeable to the nature of God, and renders us more conformable to the excellencies of that most perfect pattern, than the exercise of beneficence and goodness. The divine nature is goodness itself; and his bountiful kindness extends itself perpetually over all his works. This is the attribute which he principally delights to exercise; and in which, of all others, he most expects and requires we should imitate him. Our Saviour in all his discourses proposes this example to us to follow; and frequently repeats it, that hereby only we can truly become the children of our father which is in heaven. Some portions at least of what we enjoy are due to God, as an acknowledgment of our dependence upon him for the whole; and instead of costly sacrifices and burnt-offerings to himself, he requires only that we be willing to relieve the necessities of men like ourselves: and he seems in the wisdom of his providence to have made a very unequal distribution of the blessings of this life, on purpose that we might have continual opportunities of paying this reasonable homage to him, according to our respective abilities. It is the return he principally expects from us for all the benefits that he has done unto us. This he declares he will accept as the best expression of our love towards him. With respect to our *neighbour* and *ourselves*, the obligations we are under to practise this excellent duty are likewise great and many. We are all partakers of the same common nature, and are therefore under the same ties of common humanity. We are all subject to the same infirmities, all liable to fall under the same misfortunes, all obnoxious to the same wants; and therefore have all of us reason to exercise that compassion, which no man knows but he may stand in need of himself. God has in the whole an equal regard to all his creatures; but in the present state has made an unequal distribution of temporal blessings, that one man's abundance should supply another man's want, that there may be an equality, that the wants and necessities of all may be proportionably supplied. With respect to *ourselves*, it is almost as natural for us to feel an agreeable satisfaction and inexpressible pleasure of mind, upon satisfying a hungry soul with bread, or cloathing the naked with a garment, as it is for them to be pleased with the sense of their being relieved from these natural wants. On the contrary, what pleasure, what benefit is there in the possession of those good things which after supplying our own necessities, and making reasonable provision for our families, are laid up as useless and unprofitable superfluities, if we intend only to secure ourselves against future contingencies? A reasonable provision of this kind is neither contrary to religion,

nor inconsistent with charity ; but beyond this an unbounded desire of heaping up great riches, is by no means so very advantageous in this very respect, as a charitable dispensing them in wise proportions would be. For such is the instability of all temporal things, that no man can ever be so happy as to be out of the reach of misfortune. Before God, the best of men are sinners, and there are but few, whose conversations with men have been so inoffensive as not to deserve severe returns ; and how prosperous soever a man's circumstances may be, the next turn of affairs may tumble him headlong into wretchedness. Since therefore every man may be miserable, what can be more just than to deal with those that are so, as we would be dealt by, if we were in the same circumstances. Consequently it is highly reasonable, that every one should give and ask by the same measures or allowances. Because, as we are equal by nature, whatsoever is fit for one, must be fit for another in the like condition. It is either not fit, that I should desire relief when miserable, or else it is fit, that I should grant relief to others, when they are so : which if I refuse, I condemn myself either for being unreasonable in desiring charity when I need it, or for being unjust in denying when I am asked charity by those whom I am able to relieve. We know not how soon riches may be snatched from us, by numberless unforeseen accidents ; or we may as suddenly be taken from them, and our soul be required of us this very night. In this case no other part of them will be really beneficial to us, but that which by works of charity hath been before lent unto the Lord, who in the life to come will repay it again. And even in respect of our continuance in this present world, that which has been well laid out in doing good to mankind, has a greater probability of turning to our advantage even here (considering the variety of accidents all human affairs are subject to) than that which may have been covetously treasured up. If I should want relief, with what face can I expect it, who am deaf to the wants of the poor ? If I will shew no compassion, I must take heed that I never need any : for it will be very unreasonable to expect it ; because by my unmerciful treatment of others, I set an example against myself, where it would be impudence in me to plead for mercy either in heaven or on earth.

If we give alms out of mercy and compassion, *Manner of*
we must do it *cheerfully* : for God loveth a cheerful *almsgiving*.
giver. By compassion we make others mis-
eries our own, and by relieving them we relieve ourselves, and are
partakers with them in the comfort. Is it not a *Cheerfully*.
matter of great pleasure and delight to see the
joy which a seasonable benefaction brings to one in distress ? And
when I see a man groaning under necessity, if I relieve him, I
refresh my own bowels ; and nature within me melts into com-
passion. Therefore when we bestow our alms with an unwilling

ing mind, it is not charity, but shame or importunity that moves us; and there is no virtue in them, nor can we expect any reward. To contribute towards another's relief, because we are ashamed to do otherwise, is rather paying a tax than giving alms: and when nothing can be wrung out of me, but what is distrained by importunity, I give not for the poor's relief, but for my own quiet, as he did who neither feared God nor man.

*The vain and
impious fear of
impoverishing
ourselves by it.*

Such a one will be so far from being discouraged in his works of mercy by the vain and impious fear of *impoverishing* himself thereby, that he will still abound more and more in charity, upon a due consideration, that altho' this hazard were never so apparent, it is the command of God. Do not men rest very well satisfied in their condition, and look upon themselves to be safe enough from want, if they have security given them by some wealthy friend, that he will always supply their need and support them? And has not the charitable man this security given him by God himself, who bids men to trust in him, and to do good, with this assurance, that such shall dwell in the land and be fed?

Give seasonably. We must give *seasonably*: not but that all times may be thought seasonable to relieve the poor; yet there are particular seasons when their wants call louder; as times of sickness, scarceness of work, dearth of provisions, or on arrests, before the prison hath devoured them, or after a great loss, when their fortunes are dwindling away. When children are young, and capable of work or instruction, and parents not able to dispose of them; when the placing them out to some honest calling may prevent their turning thieves or beggars, and render them useful to the world; or when they are setting up their trades with an insufficient stock, and a little help may encourage their diligence, and advance them to a comfortable livelihood: these are the more proper seasons of almsgiving, in which, by our helping hand, we may rescue many a poor wretch out of deplorable misery, and render their future condition prosperous and happy.

*How to be
practised.*

Whenever it is in our power to practise this duty of almsgiving, it ought to be performed with a *merciful intention*? not to court the applauses of men, or to serve any secular designs; but to express our gratitude and duty to God, who hath filled us with an overflowing plenty for that very reason, to do good therewith. If we give our alms to serve a worldly interest, they proceed from self-love; and such pharisaical alms are sordid traffick for applause and interest; and our Saviour cautions us to take heed that we do not our alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise we have no reward of our Father which is in heaven. Neither are we to

give

give that in alms, which is none of our own, sup-
 posing it hath a rightful owner, to whom we can
 make a restitution; but where there is no visible
 owner, the property reverts to the hands of the supreme Lord of
 the world, who hath settled it as a pension on our poor brethren.
 To seek after and exact unlawful gains, which we are obliged
 in justice to restore to the rightful owners, is to make ourselves
 the thieves, and the poor the receivers; if such practices are done
 with a view to gather riches for such purposes:
 for to give away any man's right to supply another's necessity, is not so much an alms, as a
 robbery in the sight of God. And debtors are ob-
 liged in conscience not to disable themselves from being just to
 their creditors, by being merciful to such as are in need.

*Not by unjust
gain.*

*Nor a credi-
tor's sub-
stance.*

The charitable man will also use as much pru-
 dence as circumstances will permit, to bestow his
 alms where most needed, and in such a manner as may do the
 receiver most good, and himself no injury. For if we do not
 manage our charities with prudence, we shall create necessities
 by supplying them, and multiply miseries, by an unskilful en-
 deavour to redress them: it is with alms as it is with estates,
 where half doth consist in the discretion of the owner; and cha-
 rities distributed by a blind superstition, or a foolish pity, many
 times do more hurt than good. Or what harvest can the world
 reap from this precious seed of our alms, when they are scattered
 at all adventures, without any distinction of the cultivated
 from the fallow ground; so that the birds of prey, vagrants,
 drones, and beggars eat them up, whilst the modest impotent
 and laborious poor are utterly unprovided for? We must not
 therefore be tempted, by the impotunities of idle persons, to
 prostitute our alms to their intemperance and sloth. What a pity
 it is, that these good fruits of our charity should be thus abused, to
 pamper a company of vagrants, that wander from door to door;
 whilst many a poor industrious family, that hath more mouths
 to feed than hands to work, lies drooping under necessities and
 wants! And tho' the former are not to be altogether neglected,
 when their needs are really urgent; yet prudence will direct our
 charity to such persons as have fallen from riches to poverty, and
 are less able to toil and drudge for bread; or to such as are worn
 out with labour, or disabled by sickness, or oppressed with a nu-
 merous family. But first of all we are obliged to relieve our re-
 lations, and in all cases to prefer the necessities of those who have
 any dependence on us. The same prudence will direct us to pre-
 fer those alms, which may serve for a constant provision, and put
 one in a fixed way of living, before those which are transient,
 which do just hold him up from perishing for an hour, but do
 not take him out of the deep waters of affliction. And it is doubt-
 less a prudent charity to contribute to the building and mainte-
 nance

nance of publick workhouses for the poor, where they and their children may be provided with such work as they are capable of; and accustomed to industry, and enabled to support themselves in some future state of life. Prudent charity gives it's alms in kind rather than in value; gives cloaths to the naked, food to the hungry, physick to the sick, and books to the uninstructed; for, though money will answer all these needs, yet we are not sure it will be always laid out upon those necessities. And,

Liberally. As to the proportion of our charity, it is certain, that almsgiving ought to be performed *liberally and bountifully*: charity measures it's alms, and proportions them to the necessities it supplies, not only to rescue the miserable, but to render them happy; though I should give five times less than one who hath ten times more, I should be as liberal as he according to my ability. So the widow's two mites are pronounced by our Saviour a more liberal alms than the rich man cast into the treasury; because they cast in of their abundance, but she of her penury; wherefore though it is impossible to determine the measure of our alms, because the measure of our abilities is so various, charity exacts that we should be liberal *in proportion* to our circumstances. Nevertheless, though we may not be able to give alms to our necessitous brother; yet if by representing his necessities to others, who are able to relieve him; if by begging relief for him, which he perhaps is ashamed to do for himself, we can any way contribute to his support, we stand strictly obliged to it by charity; and this will be as acceptable to God, as the most liberal alms out of our own substance. Where the deed is impossible, God accepts the will for it, and reckons all good works to our account, which he knows we would do, if it were in our power. So when he furnisheth us with means to relieve the necessitous, he expects the deed; knowing that we cannot sincerely will the deed, if when it is in our power we do it not; the necessity of which deed, to shew the sincerity of the will, appears from that passage where it is written: Who hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And since God has not determined any thing concerning it, we must leave men,

In what proportion.

who best understand their own condition, to the guidance of their own conscience and discretion, who are to consider what is requisite to the discharge of their several obligations. For prudence doth not require of all the same proportions of charity, but of every one according to their different circumstances and abilities: and christian prudence will direct us not to be partial to ourselves, in stretching our needs and conveniencies beyond their just bounds, to spare what may be decently spared from too many servants, idle meetings, unnecessary feasts, chargeable apparel and diversions:

versions : and if we thus spare in our needless expence, and lay aside the remains for charity, the consequence will be this ; the poor will be more plentifully relieved, and we more able to do it ; and we shall reap more pleasure and profit from laying out upon the poor, than from waiting it on the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. When any miserable creature would borrow or beg of us, prudence will advise *And manner.* us not to turn him away with scorn, nor yet to remove him at a distance with disdain or violence ; but if we see reason to grant him his request, to do it with open hand, that so the freedom of our charity may raise the comfort of it, and leave no sting in the mind of the necessitous person. We ought not to oppress the modesty of the humble, of those who have been wont to give and not to receive, nor to relieve them with lofty looks, or angry words, or a severe behaviour ; nor to expose their poverty by publishing our charity, or conveying it to them in the view of the world ; but to hand our relief in such *secret and obliging manner*, that they may receive it with cheerfulness, without confusion and shame.

In fine, as giving of an alms is a real expression of our love and gratitude to God, and our Saviour Christ, God is not unrighteous to forget your *The reward of almsgiving.* work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do yet minister, says the apostle. He may defer, but he never forgets ; you may safely reckon that so much as ye have bestowed in works of charity, so much with increase you have secured in the hands of God, who will either return it in temporal blessings, or repay it with interest : not that any one should be so vain as to think we merit heaven thereby ; nor may we presume to drive a bargain with God, by putting our good works into the balance with an infinite and eternal reward.

IV. Our CHARITY must also extend to the *credit or reputation* of our neighbour, whether he be innocent or guilty. Consequently should our innocent neighbour be maliciously brought into judgment, it is our duty not only to vindicate him from false imputations in private, but to offer our voluntary evidence before the court. And tho' we know him to be guilty, if some other branch of charity or justice does not oblige the contrary, we must not take upon us to divulge his faults, nor to report them upon hear-say : for, as they are men and christians, our neighbours and brethren in Christ, it is our duty not only to honour good men for their virtues, but to pity the evil for their miseries, to relieve their wants, to conceal their defects, and to vindicate their injured reputation ; to pray for them, and to take such steps as may probably recover them to a true sense of their spiritual state. Suspensions, fancying the worst designs, and putting the

the worst interpretations upon words and actions, hard censures and suppositions, are reigning sins among adversaries; too common among those, who are otherwise serious and devout; and this not only against particular persons, but on all hands against whole bodies and parties, who, in any thing relating to the times, are of different opinions and sentiments. All which are contrary to the nature of charity, which is always inclinable to think the best, and leans to the side of favour both in judging and speaking of their deeds. Besides, it is plainly contrary to our Lord's rule, who warneth us not to judge, that we be not judged, because with what measure we mete, it will be measured to us again. Dwelling upon an injury received, and hearkening to idle tales, increase a fault, and the malice and unworthiness of him that is guilty thereof. By these our resentment is heightened, and our minds are difficult to be brought into temper; whereas if we did not give way to them, we should find ourselves much more easy to forgive.

The great rules of charity.

And the best means to help us in the practice of this virtue, is always to keep before our eyes that grand rule of loving our neighbour as ourselves, which the apostle makes the sum of our whole duty to our neighbour. For tho' men are so careless of their spiritual affairs as to wish for no assistance, they are not thereby freed by this rule from those sorts of charities. Because the love of ourselves, which is set as the measure to that of our neighbour, is understood to be that reasonable love which men ought to have for themselves; and therefore though a man fail of that reasonable love he owes himself, yet his neighbour thereby forfeits not his right. Again, what we actually would that others should do to us, is not in all cases a rule of our duty; but the lawfulness of the action is to be presupposed: for, I may not do or forbear a thing to my neighbour merely because I am content or desirous he should do or forbear the like to myself. Now that desire of mine must first be known to agree with God's commands: because a drunkard may be willing to be made a beast by another: but it is not the more lawful for him to do the like to his neighbour. So a man upon evil courses cares not to be disturbed in them by the reproofs of his superiors or friends: but that does not lessen his obligation to be a monitor to other sinners, especially to those under his care and government. Neither do we fulfill this rule by doing that to others, which we might be glad they would do to us; but it consists in this, to do all that we can expect from them, as matter of duty and right. For though a poor man might be glad, that a rich person would give him a part of his estate, so as to make his circumstances easy and plentiful; yet the rich man, who is master of his own estate, may lawfully gratify such a desire; but he may as lawfully refuse to do it. In like manner, the duty to

love our neighbour as ourselves, is not either that we should love any neighbour with equal tenderness as ourselves; for that I conceive is hardly possible: or that we should love every neighbour alike; which, if we suppose possible, were neither just nor natural: or that we should do for our neighbour all that he now does, or that we, if in his circumstances, might perhaps wish and desire to be done for ourselves; for, such desires may be irregular; or if not sinful, yet unreasonable: but it is to do all that for him, which, were our case his, and his ours, we should in reason and good conscience expect and be glad to have done to ourselves. And, as the love a man bears to himself is always sincere, so should the love to our neighbour be, in this respect, as that to ourselves; not mercenary and designing, but disinterested and hearty, intending the benefit of the party we express it to; not indirectly seeking our own profit or pleasure: this end whoever constantly aims at, and steadily pursues, will never greatly fail in the particulars of his duty. So he that loves his neighbour sincerely as himself; and is willing to do to all men, as he desires they should do to him; that thinks himself sent into the world on purpose to do good to others, and looks upon it as the sum and end of his duty, to promote the universal peace and happiness of mankind, will certainly upon this principle regularly and uniformly perform all the parts of his duty towards men: he will naturally treat his superiors with chearful submission, his benefactors with gratitude and all decent respect, his equals with affability and readiness to do all offices of kindness, and his inferiors with gentleness, moderation, and charity.

V. *Peace-making* is another great instance of charity; which, though it doth not directly fall under any of the foregoing heads, yet frequently contributes to the practice and success of them all: because it will not report of neighbours any thing false, nor any thing true which may tend to variance; and it will discourage eve-droppers and tale-bearers, who, out of malice, envy, or idleness, are busy-bodies; a peaceable man will never sow the seeds of dissension. If there be any dissension, a peaceable man will so behave himself as not to inflame or widen a breach. If men would behave with this prudence towards those that are at variance, it would go a great way to the shortening of quarrels. Human nature is not so very bad as some represent it; most of the little strifes and contentions which happen would die of their own accord, if ill-natured people (pretending to be friends to both parties) did not blow the coals, and throw on fresh fuel. As coals are to burning coals, and as wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife: where no wood is the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth. Where the contention is hot and fierce a lover of peace will incline both parties to cool.

*Peace-making.**Shortens quarrels.**Removes contention.*

ness and good temper. If thou blow the spark, it will burn; and if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched; and both these come out of thy mouth. Quarrels proceed out of the mouth, by carrying tales, aggravating offences, or persuading revenge; so damping them proceeds out of the mouth, by soft and gentle intreaties, by representing the smallness of the things they quarrel about, and by shewing how inconsistent it is with peace to take offence at every thing, or to interpret it in the worst sense. When the passions are hot and inflamed on both sides, though gentle words and intreaties cannot suppress them, they may serve to bring them down. When a man, desirous to make peace, sees that they are resolved to fight it out, he will endeavour that their contention may be ended with as little hurt as may be; he will persuade them to refer the matter in dispute to the judgment of some wise neighbour, where, with less charge and more satisfaction, the strife may be ended: because, tho' a law-suit may determine a controversy, it commonly continues a breach of charity among the contending parties *. And

*A peace-maker
must be also
peaceable.*

Whoever undertakes this good office of peace-making must take care that he lives a remarkably peaceable life himself: for in contending parties one or the other will in all probability be angry at good advice, and endeavour to take off the weight of such admonitions as tend to reconciliation; if the peace-maker be given to contention also, then it may be objected, as the Hebrew did to Moses, who made thee a judge over us? Or at least he may be abruptly silenced with, Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye. Therefore he that would persuade peace in another, must be also peaceable himself.

*Of going to
law.*

Men are apt to go to law for every trifle; and because they have law on their side, they cannot be persuaded that they are to blame for so doing. Yet it should be considered, that although all lawful suits are not sinful, for a christian may go to law to keep his rightful possession, or to recover what is wrongfully taken or detained from him; yet where there is no sin in the suit itself, there is often in the management of it: so that it is a temptation and a snare, and every man should be cautious how he embarks upon so dangerous a bottom, where justice and charity are stranded or thrown over-board. A man at the lowest must be assured, that he claims or defends his right, otherwise the law suit is vexatious or worse. What we propose to get or keep should be of a considerable value, or else it favours of a contentious spirit, to hazard our own and our neighbour's peace for a trifle. Victory should not be the motive, but right. Revenge should never mingle with

* See what has been said on this subject in the duty of parents and children, p. 150, and also here below.

our resentment; for Christ declares against this rigour of the Jewish law. And one of the great springs of law-suits and contentions, such as verbal trespasses and injuries, will very rarely bear the weight of an action, and acquit the conscience of him who appeals to the laws; because all our works are to be done in charity.

We must not only therefore say that we forgive our enemies, but shew the reality of our intentions, by taking all opportunities to do them all the good in our power; otherwise it may justly be feared, that malice still lurketh in the heart.

But he that fulfills the command of doing good to them that hate him, not only does his duty, and follows the example of our Saviour, but heaps coals of fire on their heads, to melt them in to love and compassion, and consequently to a thorough reconciliation. So that the great hindrance of the practice of this duty to our neighbour is that *self-love*, which, being an immoderate love of our own worldly interests, is the foundation of all contention and injustice; because we thereby seek only to please ourselves, whereas we ought also to please our neighbour, for his good to edification: for even Christ pleased not himself. But

To obtain perfect charity, we must not think it the whole of our duty, when this obstacle is removed; because as every grace is the gift of God, we must *pray earnestly to God to work it in us, and to send his Spirit to frame our hearts to a meek and peaceable temper.*

The charity of our actions must reach un- to our enemies.

Self-love an hindrance to this charity.

And prayer is a means to procure it.

THE THIRD PART

OF THE NEW

Whole Duty of Man:

CONTAINING

Our Duty to OURSELVES.

SUNDAY XIII.

- I. Of SOBRIETY, *consisting in a right government of our thoughts.*
- II. Of humility, *and of it's necessity and usefulness.*
- III. Of Pride, *it's danger and folly, as it respects the gifts of nature, fortune and grace.*
- IV. Of vain glory, *it's danger, folly, and the means to avoid and overcome it.*
- V. Of meekness, *it's advantages, and the means of obtaining it: And,*
- VI. Of consideration, *it's benefits, and of the danger of in-consideration.*

WE

*Duty to our-
selves.*

SOBERLY;

Of sobriety.

*The govern-
ment of our
thoughts.*

*What power
we have over
our thoughts.*

*Very little o-
ver the first
motions.*

WE come now to those duties, which in a particular manner regard OURSELVES, and are summed up by the apostle in the word *SOBERLY*; for the word *sobberly* in it's native sense signifies a soundness and firmness of mind, governing and directing inferior appetites and passions, and searching and regulating the whole frame of soul and body in our personal and private capacities. So that in respect to the soul *sobriety* is a *right governing* our passions and affections or appetites; which never can be done without a previous regulation of our **THOUGHTS**; for, as the wise man says, We must keep our hearts with all diligence: because out of them are the issues of life; Or, the goodness or badness of our lives doth altogether depend upon the attending or not attending to the thoughts, and motions, and inclinations of our minds. And therefore it is a very proper question, How a man hath power over his own thoughts? There is not indeed any single answer to be given to this question that will fit all men. Some men, by the very principles of their make and constitution, are much better able to govern their thoughts than others. Some, that are naturally weaker, have by long use and many trials obtained a greater power over their thoughts than others. Again, The same persons that at some times have a greater power over the motions of their minds, may at other times have a less command over them; and this according as their health, or their business, or a hundred contingencies or outward things do affect them. And,

In all cases the *first motions* of our minds are produced so quick, that there is not time enough given for reason to interpose. Again, when a man's mind is vigorously affected and possessed, either with the outward objects of sense, or with inward passions of any kind, in that case he hath little or no command of his thoughts. His mind at that time will be in a manner wholly taken up with what it is then full of. Nor will he be able, till those impressions are worn off, to think freely of what he pleaseth. There are some cases likewise, where a man's thoughts are in a manner forced upon him, from the present temper and indisposition of his body. So that, so long as that habit of body lasts, he cannot avoid those kind of thoughts. This is the case of some deeply hypochondriac persons; many of which will be haunted with a set of thoughts and fancies, that they can by no means get rid of, though they desire it never so earnestly. We may properly enough call these fancies of theirs, waking dreams; as their dreams are their sleeping fancies. But,

Though

Though we cannot in many cases think always of what we would; nay, though we cannot hinder abundance of thoughts from coming into our minds against our will: yet it is always in our power to assent to our thoughts, or to deny our consent to them: if we do not consent to them, but endeavour to stop, and stifle, and resist them as soon as we are aware of them, there is yet no harm done. So that our thoughts, how indecent or irregular soever they may be, are rather to be accounted the infirmities of our corrupt nature, than our sins properly so called. If we close with any thought that prompts us to evil, so as to be pleased with it, to delight in it, to think of pursuing it, till it be brought into action: in that case we are no longer to plead our original corruption; for in that very instant we become actual sinners, or actual transgressors of the law of God.

In what the liberty and morality of thoughts consists.

If we would keep our hearts in a good frame, and order our thoughts to good purposes; our first and greatest care should be, that we rightly pitch upon our main designs; and that we chuse that for the great business of our lives, that really ought to be so. But

The method of governing 'em.

1. *by bending our thoughts to good purposes.*

The greatest concernment of all, is to approve ourselves to that great God who made us, and disposes of all our affairs; and who, according as we sincerely endeavour or not endeavour to serve him, will make us either very happy or very miserable, both in this life and the other.

2. *By making religion our chief care.*

They that would thus keep their hearts always in so good a frame must have a special care to avoid two things, *viz.* Idleness and loose company. And a wise man should never be at such a pass as to say, I have nothing to do, I do not know how to spend my next hour; idleness, and having nothing to do, is the mother of most of those vain and unprofitable and sinful fancies, in which some spend their days. And whereas temptations do now and then come into the way of other men; the idle man is forced to seek out temptations for the shipwreck of his virtue. Loose and impertinent conversation is not much better than idleness. For where-ever it is much used, it will so emasculate a man's mind, and take off the edge and vigour of it, as to serious things, that he cannot easily get it into a good frame again. Evil communication (saith St Paul) doth corrupt good manners. And therefore those people, a great part of whose life is taken up in gadding up and down; in play; in merry meetings; in telling or hearing idle stories; and the like: it is impossible but their thoughts and inclinations, and the whole frame of their hearts will be suitable; that is to say, very frothy; very light and foolish;

3. *By avoiding idleness and bad company.*

ish;

ish; not to say, profane and wicked, and atheistical too, if the company they much converse with be of that strain.

4. *By attending to their first motions.* Be as attentive as is possible to the first motions of your minds; and whenever you find that they tend towards something that is forbidden, stop them as soon as you can. You cannot perhaps, for instance, prevent a sudden passion of anger from rising in your minds upon twenty accidents; but as soon as you feel this passion, you can thus far stifle it: you can seal up your mouth, so that the passion shall not vent itself in unseemly words. If any indecent, impure fancies or desires should be excited in you upon any occasion, it was not perhaps in your power to keep them from coming into your minds, but it is in your power to withdraw from the temptation that causeth them, and endeavour to direct your thoughts to some other object; at least not to proceed one step in any outward action towards the accomplishing of those desires. Every check that you give to the first motions of sin, makes the next assault of them the less furious. And if you do constantly use yourselves thus to guard and watch over your hearts, you will in time obtain such a command over them, that you will not be troubled with a quarter of those irregular desires and passions, which heretofore upon several occasions used to be kindled in you. That you may be able not only to keep bad thoughts out of your minds, but also to have a constant spring of good ones, converse with discreet and pious persons; read good books, especially the holy scriptures; and take times of meditation and recollection; and above all, offer fervent and constant prayers to God. And

5. *By discretion.* Notwithstanding what I have hitherto said concerning the diligence with which we are to keep our hearts; yet this is always to be remembered, that with our diligence we must be careful to join discretion: my meaning is this, we must have a care not to extend our thoughts immoderately, and more than our temper will bear, even to the best things. And the way to do that is, not to put them too much, or too long, upon the stretch at any one time; but to relax them when there is occasion, and to let them run out and entertain themselves upon any thing that comes next to hand, so long as it is innocent.

And, 6. *by living under a sense of God's presence.* Another excellent rule for the good government of our thoughts is, always to live under a constant sense of God's presence and inspection. For he that made the eye, shall he not see? and if he do see, shall he not punish? Hell and destruction are before the Lord! How much more then are the hearts of the children of men? And, if it be so much shame to disclose our wicked, presumptuous, vain, trifling and vicious thoughts to our fellow-creatures, as most men account it to be, lest they upbraid

or punish them for it; How much more should they be ashamed and dread to admit such thoughts, which are criminal in the sight of God, when they believe he sees and is able to punish them.

II. Above all, it will be found of exceeding *Humility*: great use to be clothed with HUMILITY: not that fawning humility of outward expression and behaviour, which covers a false and a proud heart; but which admonisheth a man of his own corruption and subordination, and duty to God and man, whose fruits are to be discerned best in a relative view. For, with regard to superiors in civil stations in the world, true humility consists in obeying them willingly in all things just and lawful; in submitting to the authority even of the froward and unworthy; in not despising their persons, exposing their weaknesses, or insulting over their infirmities. With regard to superiors in natural abilities, true humility consists, not in submitting our understandings to them blindly and implicitly, but in being willing and desirous to be instructed and informed by them; in not envying them the advantages God has given them above ourselves; nor repining, but on the contrary rejoicing, at their being preferred or honoured, according to the proportion of their true merit or capacity. With regard to superiors in religious improvements, humility consists likewise in rejoicing to see the practice of virtue, and the advancement of the kingdom of God upon earth; not grieving, but taking pleasure, to find such persons esteemed highly in the world, and proposing them to ourselves as examples and patterns for our imitation. With regard to our equals, true humility consists in civil and affable, in courteous and modest behaviour; patiently permitting our equals (when it shall so happen) to be preferred before us; not thinking ourselves injured, when others but of equal merit chance to be more esteemed; willingly submitting, for peace sake, to many things, if not very unreasonable; yet otherwise such as in our own judgment we should not chuse or think best of. With regard to our inferiors, humility consists in assuming to ourselves no more than the difference of men's circumstances, and the performance of their respective duties, for preserving the regularity and good order of the world, necessarily requires. With regard to inferiors in natural abilities, such as learning, and knowledge, riches, plenty, and the like, humility consists in considering, that possibly they have some other gifts, which may be wanting in us; and in being willing to communicate to them the advantages we enjoy, that they may be the better for the things wherewith God hath blessed us. The true humility of a rich man consists in being willing to assist them, by relieving their necessities, endeavouring to make the condition of the meanest easy and supportable to themselves. And in like manner, the true humility of persons

persons endued with more learning and knowledge than others, consists in being willing to communicate what they know, and in sincerely desiring that all others may attain the same knowledge with themselves. Towards our inferiors in respect of religious improvements, true humility consists in being rightly sensible of our own many infirmities, even those of us who may be apt to imagine ourselves to have made the greatest improvements; and in being sincerely solicitous for the welfare and the salvation of all men; it consists in endeavouring to influence men towards religion, by meekness rather than by power: in not affecting to gain the empty applause of men, by an outward ostentation of greater piety than others; in condescending to those beneath us, and not disdaining even to yield to them in indifferent things; in bearing their infirmities patiently and without frowardness; in forbearing to judge or despise those that differ from us in opinion; in taking care not to offend, by haughty and presumptuous behaviour, such persons as by meekness might be prevailed upon to believe in Christ, or such as by kind treatment might be kept from departing into divisions; in taking heed not to impose needless difficulties upon those under our power: for so our Saviour describes the pride of the Pharisees. Finally, it consists in using great gentleness, even to those that have offended: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meek-

It's necessity.

ness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Without practising it towards superiors there can be no government; without exercising it towards equals, there can be no friendship and mutual charity. And with regard to inferiors, there are proper arguments to deter us from pride, upon account of every particular advantage we may seem to have over others, whether in respect of our civil stations in the world, or of our natural abilities, or of our religious improvements. Humility therefore will keep

It's usefulness.

us from despising any, and incline us to learn all we can; not to set any value upon knowledge not attended with a suitable practice; to regard all mankind as our fellow-creatures, and esteem them as God has appointed; and to acknowledge, that by the law of our creation we cannot comfortably subsist independent of our fellows. Humility thus tempered will dispose one to the cheerful performance of the duties of humanity to all men; so if they are above him, he will cheerfully render them their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour; and if he stands in a superior rank, he will readily condescend to men of low estate. Thus it is as great a contradiction to say, any one is a proud christian, as it would be to say, such a one is a wicked saint. All the gospel, it's precepts, it's great examples, it's glorious prospects, tend to humble the

pride of man ; and whoever will come after Christ, must, in this respect, deny himself. It is possible that we may obtain the character of humble people with men, from a modest outside, and negligence of garb, a condescending carriage, and lowly speeches ; while God, that searches the heart, may see pride reigning there under these disguises, and that such plausible appearances are intended to support a haughty and overbearing heart : therefore no single branch of goodness deserves more attention, to judge of the state of our souls, than humility : for if we grow in knowledge, and are puffed up with pride, we lose more in goodness than we gain in profit ; if we improve in other excellencies, and exceed in the conceit of ourselves, we make those things nothing in the sight of God, which would otherwise become valuable, offered up to him by an humble, lowly, and a meek spirit. For,

Knowledge puffeth up ; many would sooner bear a reflection upon their morals, than upon *Self-conceit.* their understandings : the serpent was early sensible that this was man's weak side, when he used that artifice to seduce our first parents ; If they would follow his counsel, they should be as gods, knowing good and evil. The deceiver gained his point ; man fell into disgrace with his God, and not only propagated sin and death to his posterity, but, as a peculiar legacy, he seems to have filled them with a *vain conceit*, that they enjoy that knowledge which was then promised by the devil. Hence under this strong delusion no branch of pride more needs a cure, though none hath less to support it, than conceit of our own abilities. Consequently, to moderate the conceit of our own sufficiency, we must endeavour to attain to *Curbed.*

a sense of the imperfection of our nature. It is true, there is a dignity in our nature in comparison of the lower creation ; but the faculties given us are limited at the best ; and many things are above them which we cannot grasp, things too wonderful for us, and not to be attained by us. For

To an humble mind God's word is a sufficient *By a just esteem* reason of faith, which should teach us not to be *of God.* wise above what is written in matters of *pure re-* *velation*, not to venture to publish our own inventions to account how such things are, nor to be positive in them ; because such things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God, any farther than he has been pleased to make them known by his word. This will make us confess our own liableness to mistake, even where we think we have formed a right judgment. In considering the power of prejudice, or readiness to make hasty judgments, the plausible colours which may be put upon error, we have reason, in most judgments we form, to carry this cautionary thought, It is possible we may be over-*seen.* There is no person but must confess, that he hath actually been

been mistaken in former judgments, even in some where he was very positive and sure; which is a good reason why we should carry the thought of our fallibility about with us in other cases.

And of man.

We should retain a moderate apprehension of our knowledge, when we compare it with the attainments of others. It is true, every good man judges himself in the right in every sentiment he maintains; for if he was convinced it was an error, he would give it up: and it follows, that he thinks those of a contrary judgment mistaken, as long as he judges himself in the right; yet this should not puff him up above measure: he only judges his own knowledge superior to those with whom he compares his own; but at the same time confesses, that in this life we all know but in part: and so, though some know less, others know more than himself: though he may be better acquainted with some particulars, yet he grants that others may exceed in other parts of learning; that he may have made less improvement of greater advantages than they have made of fewer opportunities; and that he owes it more to the providence or grace of God than to himself, that he is distinguished from the most stupid and ignorant. None are so

Breeds mistakes.

apt to run into gross mistakes and infirmities, or so hard to be made sensible of them, as he that over-values his own parts and wisdom: he hath no patience to examine any thing justly; he counts it a disparagement to suspend his judgment; he understands all things at first sight, and by instinct: and if he judges rightly, he hath good fortune; but if not, it is impossible to convince or reclaim him:

It's impatient.

for he is impatient of opposition, disdains counsel, and cannot bear the least contradiction, or endure to be gainsaid; he scorns all instruction and rebuke, and takes it for an affront if you yield not to him in every thing he advances: and so swelled with an over-weening esteem of his own abilities, never so much as once dreams that it is possible he may be deceived and deluded. Seest thou a man wise in his own

Hardens a sinner.

conceit? there is more hopes of a fool than of him. Finally, This self-conceit hardens a man in his sins, and makes him deaf to instructions, whilst he thinks thus of himself, that even his defects are beauties, and he can excuse, if not commend, his own ugliness.

Pride, what it is.

III. Opposite to humility also is the sin of PRIDE: of which men readily condemn others and easily excuse themselves, through self-conceit, or opinion of their own wisdom. We cannot endure any one to lay down, usurp, or force customs, humours, or manners, as if we had no judgment of our own to govern and order our own affairs; and yet many, who call this pride in another, presume themselves wise enough to set patterns or give laws to every body else. For, pride makes men foolish, and void of caution; and this puts them upon doing

It's danger and folly.

doing things that bring them to dishonour. It makes men negligent, and improvident of the future; and this often throws them into sudden calamities: it makes men rash and peevish, obstinate and insolent; and this seldom fails to bring down ruin upon them: it involves men perpetually in strifes and contentions; and these always multiply sin, and are inconsistent with true happiness: it disoblige men's best friends, and gives their enemies perpetual advantages against them; and this often draws great inconveniencies upon them: it makes men vain and lovers of flattery; rejecting those about them who would do them most kindness, and liking those best who do 'em the greatest injury; and this causes them to be insensible of their own disease, till they suddenly fall under contempt: it makes men impatient of good advice and instruction; and that renders them incorrigible in their vices: it fills men full of vain-glorious designs, employing all their thoughts in self-confident imaginations; and this makes them incapable of religious improvements, and to have no relish of true wisdom.

This makes men quarrel with God and his worship. Every objection against the being of a Deity and providence is raised by pride and an arrogant opinion of our own understanding; as if nothing could be true or reasonable, but what is within our sight and penetration. When such persons cannot apprehend the usefulness of any part of the creation; when any thing happens that seems confused and disordered; when their wisdom cannot discern the end, benefit, and design of every thing that falls out, presently they charge God with folly and ill contrivance, or banish him out of the world, and impute all to blind chance, or unavoidable fate. Thus debates proceed from pride: whilst men too highly value their own private judgments in things doubtful and indifferent, think meanly of the determinations of their superiors, and will rather sacrifice peace and charity, than give up any trifling opinion they happen to espouse. And there will be no end of them, till we can be brought to think that governors may be wiser, and know better than we what is fit and decent for the publick good. Therefore nobody ought to make himself the standard of wisdom, nor expect that every one should yield to his humours, and deny their own inclinations, that they may gratify his. On the contrary, what is more graceful and lovely, and more charming, than humility and modesty, a mean estimation of ourselves, and a willingness to yield and condescend? Doth it not render us both acceptable to God and men? Doth it not carry a singular agreeableness in itself? And tho' humility may seem to expose a man to some contempt, yet it is truly the readiest way to honour; as, on the contrary, pride is the most improper and absurd means for the accomplishing the end at which it aims. There are no other vices but do in some

Opposes God.

Drawing into other sins.

measure attain their end; covetousness does usually raise an estate, and ambitious endeavours do often advance men to high places; but pride and insolence, and contempt of others, do certainly defeat their own projects. When the proud man aims at respect and esteem, he never attains it; for all mankind do naturally hate and slight him. Again, a proud and conceited temper of mind is very likely to run into mistakes, because pride and fullness of a man's self do keep out knowledge, and stop all the passages by which wisdom and instruction should enter into men: besides that it provokes God to be their enemy, to abandon men to their own follies and mistakes, and to pursue them with extraordinary punishments in this or the next world: for pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall: and again, every one that is proud in heart shall not be unpunished; for, God resisteth the proud, but the meek will he guide in judgment, and will give more grace and wisdom to the humble. Therefore,

Means of humility.

The way to avoid pride and to attain to humility, is to remember that all the advantages we enjoy either of body or mind, above others, are not the effect of our merit, but of God's bounty: That those whom we are apt to contemn, are valuable in the sight of God, the only fountain of true honour: That by having consented to sin, we have committed the most shameful action imaginable, the most contrary to justice and right reason, and to all sorts of decency; and that as long as we are clothed with flesh and blood, we are still liable to the same offences against the Majesty of heaven. We must suppress all proud and vain thoughts when they first arise in our minds, and especially never suffer them to take possession of our imagination, and keep a constant watch over our words and actions, that we may check the first inclinations to pride and vain glory. And whoever does not thus watch

And when frustrated,

over his own heart, will be in danger of falling into this sin; because if God is so good to bear with him for a while in his folly, he never thinks of repentance; but, mistaking his forbearance, has the vanity to esteem himself a favourite of God: and when at last he is corrected by any manner of punishment, from God or man, he is so far from considering it's justice, necessity, and his own just deserts, that he murmurs against God, and breathes out his blasphemous hatred against his divine justice; and consequently becomes much more reproachful to his neighbour, who shall attempt by any means to draw him to a true knowledge of himself. Whereas he that is of a calm and meek temper, is always ready to receive the truth, and holds the balance of his judgment even; but passion sways and inclines it one way, and that commonly against reason and truth. So that pride is a great hindrance to knowledge, and the very worst quality that a learner can have; it makes

makes men refuse instruction, out of a conceit that they are in no need thereof; the sufficiency of their knowledge has hindered many from what they might have known.

The *folly* of which sin appears, in that we value ourselves, very frequently, upon things that add no true worth to us; that neither make us better nor wiser; that are in their own nature perishable, and of which we are not owners but stewards. Or if the things be valuable in themselves, they are God's immediate work in us; and to be proud of them is the surest way to lose them. The *folly* of pride appears by considering the three things whereof men are apt to be proud, the goods of nature, of fortune, and of grace. The *goods of nature* are beauty, strength, wit, &c. Now the *folly* of being proud of any of these appears: *In respect of the goods of nature.* Because if we really have them, which we are apt often to mistake, they are possessed, most of 'em, by other creatures in a greater degree. For is not the white and red of the most celebrated beauty's face far surpass by the whiteness of the lilly and redness of the rose? and is not the greatest strength and swiftness of man greatly exceeded by the strength and swiftness of many other creatures? neither are they at all durable; for a phrensy, sickness, or old age, certainly destroys them. And whatever they are, we give them not to ourselves; but receive them from the hands of God. As for the *goods of fortune*, which are wealth, honour, &c. we have no reason to be proud of them; because they add no true worth to a man, and are in their nature perishable; besides, we have them but as stewards; and they are not owing to ourselves, for if they are lawfully got, 'tis God's blessing; if unlawfully, we have them on such terms, that we have no reason to boast of them. And lastly, as to the *goods of grace*, which are those virtues men are endowed with; it is a great folly to be proud of them; because though they are things in themselves truly valuable, yet they are God's immediate gifts to us; and to be proud of them is the surest way to lose them, and the consequence of such a loss is no less than eternal punishment. *The goods of fortune.* *The goods of grace.*

IV. Another opposite to humility is the sin of VAIN-GLORY, which is an eager desire of the applause of men: a sin that prevents the admission of Christ into the heart; and consequently sets us in the utmost danger; since all our safety, and hope of salvation, depend upon our being one with Christ and Christ in us. Besides, this sin is the high road to many more: because he that is resolved to court the praise of men at all adventures, will never scruple to commit the greatest sins, when they are in fashion, or are supposed in any wise to contribute to gratify his vain-glory. *The sin of it.*

Danger.

Yet this little air, which is no more than a blast or the breath of men, yields no real advantage : for it is no proof of my wisdom and goodness, because another tells me I am wise and good : with which, if he tells it to my face, I must be an arrant fool to be pleased : because it is too often

Folly.

flattery : and there is as much *folly* to be pleased, when applauded behind my back, because it neither brings me pleasure nor profit. *Again*; he that so eagerly pursues praise, as to reject the dictates of reason and conscience, and only takes care to do what may raise his esteem among men, yields himself a slave to every flattering and deceitful tongue, and reaps to himself a painful and uneasy mind. Which pain and uneasiness is much increased by the disturbances and inquietudes and tortures of mind they are under, who instead of praise meet with unexpected reproach. And if we look upon this sin in a christian sense, it will be found destructive both of our prayers, almsgiving, and of every good work : for they, who only do good to be seen of men, must expect no other reward than the portion of those hypocrites, that love the praise of men more than the praise of God ; which is a folly in so high a degree, as not only deprives us of eternal joy, but hurries us into endless miseries. And *lastly*, if we consider vain-glory in regard to some indifferent actions, it not only endangers our eternal state, but it brings upon us the scorn and contempt of the wise and virtuous in this life, which is sure to eclipse all other actions, be they never so deserving of praise.

Helps against vain-glory.

To avoid this sin of *vain-glory*, examine carefully whether thou hast done any christian duty for the sake of human applause : and check and resist every too eager desire thereof in thy most indifferent actions. But, above all, let duty be the motive; and let reason always direct thee to please God, who is able to reward thee, rather than man, from whose applause thou never canst reap any real good. And to conclude, let not thy heart be too much exalted even at the just praise of thy virtues; because, as they are the gift of God, their glory belongs to him alone. As for the praise given to *indifferent* and *bad* actions, (the too common subjects of worldly praise) the former, having no goodness in them, deserve no commendation ; and our bad actions should make us tremble, and constant in prayer, lest we thereby incur that woe, which our Saviour pronounces against all such, who make sin the subject of their glory, when he says, Woe unto you when men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Meekness.

V. The next christian virtue is MEEKNESS, which implies a calmness and quiet steadiness of mind, and a chearful and absolute resignation to God's providence, in opposition to fretfulness and murmuring against his appointments. God may allow the complaints of nature under

our burdens and exercises ; yet he expects we should check and suppress all complaints of him, and every impeachment of his justice, wisdom and goodness in his works. Wherefore the meek exercise themselves in a careful restraint and regulation of their passions, reducing them within the bounds of reason and religion, and are of a

*Advantages
of it.*

sweet, courteous and obliging carriage : the meek will not take offence hastily and without just reason, but be careful that they be not angry without a cause. Neither will they rashly suppose that a provocation is meant ; that is, they do not judge by appearances. There may be the aspect, and yet no design of affront or prejudice ; and if so, what was not ill intended, should never be ill taken ; therefore we should not give way to suspicions, which cannot be supported with evidence, but put the best construction upon words or actions. Check all resentment, till the grounds for it be well considered ; such a precaution would prevent much passion. Again, meekness will not resent higher than the merit of the offence given : supposing a real and great provocation, a meek man will keep a strict guard upon his own spirit, that his mind be not inflamed by ill usage, nor other people's sins draw him in to speak unadvisedly with his lips. It will make us careful, not to render railing for railing, but to break the force of unreasonable anger by gentle answers ; moderate replies turn away wrath. It also will avoid rough methods, to right ourselves even from considerable injuries ; it will dispose us to try the mildest ways first, to try argument before punishment, and conference before law ; and private admonition before we make a publick example of our neighbour. And when at last our own security, or the common good shall determine us to seek publick justice against any one, meekness directs that it should be done without hatred, and merely with a view to reach those ends which are lawful and commendable. By this we shall be kept in a readiness to be reconciled, when an offence is acknowledged, and reasonable satisfaction tendered ; and if he should persist in his ill mind, meekness will guard us against all malice, and make us ready to help the worst enemy in the common offices of life, if he need it ; and heartily to pray for him, especially for his repentance unto salvation. It will teach us to moderate our affections and passions, as not willingly to give offence ; not to be overbearing in company, full of one's self, to the neglect of others ; but to express civility to all, agreeable to their stations, out of a sense of our duty to God, and love to one another. By this, such as are in any station of inferiority, will be disposed contentedly to submit to the duties thereof : and the same excellent spirit will form persons in superior relations to a lowly and condescending temper : A temper to which Christ has added a blessing, and promised that they who possess it shall inherit the earth : for meekness preserves a man from danger ; and while unbridled passions tend to make

all about us our enemies, they must be of a very brutish nature indeed, who will be outrageous against a man that studies to walk harmless and blameless, and to give no offence. At least, the meek will be free from those vexations and troubles of life, which hasty, froward people bring upon themselves, as the fruits of their own ill behaviour. And forasmuch as God's providence and promises secure to them as many good things of the earth as shall be for their real welfare; so, if they meet with unjust and ungrateful returns, they may confidently rely upon God, as their protector and avenger, who is ready to rise to judgment to save the meek of the earth. So whether they have a larger or less share of outward goods, they are prepared, by the mastery of their passions, to enjoy more comfort in what they possess, than those who interrupt their enjoyment by the tumult of their own thoughts. Therefore,

Means of obtaining it.

Let us persuade ourselves to seek meekness, in opposition to the folly and danger of anger, and to look upon it as a matter of necessity, that meekness should ordinarily have dominion over passion and pride. It may be, there shall be much difficulty; but we are able, by keeping a careful guard upon our hearts, and observing the beginning of anger in ourselves, to carry the conquest: for it is much easier to extinguish it in the first sparks than when it has got a-head. Let us fix it as a law to ourselves, that we will make a short pause upon the first rise of a resentment; this will stifle most passions. Besides, if we would lower our inordinate esteem of ourselves, and of this world and it's affairs, it would go a great way in removing the fuel of passion and pride. To think often of our own frailty and liableness to offend, and how many indiscretions and weaknesses others have to bear with in us, should cherish in us the spirit of meekness, by considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted. We should often remember the indecencies and ill effects of passion. For he that is in a transport of passion appears to be in a fit of madness in every body's eye: and that is the glass in which we should see our own face.

The mischiefs which passion produces in the world are innumerable; the sins it causeth are intolerable; and the shame and sorrow for our past follies, which attack us in our cooler hours, are most tiresome; consequently meekness, and patience, and humility, and modesty, and such virtues of christianity, do not in reason tend to dispirit men, and break their true courage, but only to regulate it, and take away the fierceness and brutishness thereof. Experience teacheth, that men of the truest courage have many times least of pride and insolence, of passion and fierceness,

The case of passionate people.

when they are swayed by the principles of the gospel. And therefore such as by nature have a stronger proneness than others to be warm or peevish, should know, that the duty of meekness is of perpetual obligation.

obligation. And tho' it be more difficult to govern their passion, yet this is absolutely necessary in the christian religion, and they must take more pains with their own hearts, and be the more earnest in prayer to God for his assistance. Their distemper is not incurable by the heavenly physician: and they will have one pleasure upon a conquest, above those of milder tempers, it will be more evident that their meekness is not forced. Or, should we consult reason, we must confess, that when evil consequences may be foreseen, they should rather have fortified us against the tide of passion, than passion be made use of afterwards, as a plea for it's excuse. And a sincere christian will rather consider those effects of his passion, as aggravations of the sinfulness of it; and therefore be more watchful for the future, and diligent to grow in meekness, which will be a preparation for heaven, where neither pride nor passion have any place, but all is calm and serene, peaceable, meek and happy.

VI. CONSIDERATION is a duty we owe to *Consideration.* our souls, by which our state and actions may be preserved from evil. For, by the virtue of consideration man is deterred from all rash undertakings, and considers the subject well before he fixes any resolution; *The use of consideration.* which will prompt us to chuse and pursue what the understanding represents as good and advantageous to us, and to shun and avoid what is represented as evil and destructive to eternal happiness.

This will teach us not to rest upon a bare faith *The rules by* that Christ died for our sins: or a presumption *which to try* that we are of the number of God's elect, and are *our state.* decreed to salvation; which is rather the phrensy of a distempered brain, than the effects of a rational judgment founded on the word of God: But it will call us to the law and the covenant, by which we are to be tried at the last day, and convince us that our faith and all our hopes are vain, which are not strictly conformable to the gospel of Christ; by which we are taught, that whoever continues in the practice of any one sin in defiance of God's commands, cannot ever hope to find mercy without timely repentance.

Seeing then that our life is no more than a gust of breath in our nostrils, we cannot reasonably suppose ourselves to be in the favour of God, till we are made sensible of our own weak and momentary state, and are thoroughly persuaded of the necessity to exercise ourselves in holy affections; as in love and desire of what is good; in hatred and detestation of what is evil; in sorrow, shame, and self-abhorrence for having transgressed in any particular; in praise and thanksgiving for having been enabled in any tolerable measure to have done our duty; in adoration and imitation, in faith, in hope and charity, and in resignation of ourselves to the Almighty. Consideration hath an universal influence

ence upon the whole life of a christian, and is an admirable instrument to quicken our progress in all the graces of the Holy Ghost; and illuminates our understandings with the knowledge of our duty, and stores our memories with all such arguments as are proper to excite us to the performance thereof. This habituates our minds to spiritual objects, and raises them above the perishing things of this world; this strengthens our holy purposes, arms us against temptations, and inflames all the faculties of our souls with earnest desires of attaining and enjoying our chiefest happiness. And,

The danger of inconsideration. The *want* of this consideration is the cause why men go on stupidly in an evil way, and are not sensible of the danger of their present course; because they do not attend to the consequences of it: Therefore certainly, if men would seriously consider what sin is, and what shall be the sad portion of sinners hereafter, they would resolve upon a better course of life. Can it be thought that any man would live in the lusts of the flesh and of intemperance, or out of covetousness defraud or oppress his neighbour, did he seriously consider, that God is the avenger of such? In most men it is not so much a positive disbelief of the truth, as inadvertency and want of consideration, that makes them to go on so securely in a sinful state. Consequently, would men consider what sin is, and what will be the fearful consequence of it, probably in this world, but most certainly in the other; they could not chuse but flee from it, as the greatest evil that can befall them.

Our actions. Again, we must consider our *actions* both *before* we do them, and *after* they are done. We must *not* be *rash* and *headstrong*: for would men but take a serious and impartial view of their lives and actions; would they but consider the tendency of a sinful course, and whither it will bring them at last; would the vicious and dissolute man but look about him, and consider how many have been ruined in that very way that he is in, how many lie slain and wounded in it, that it is the way to hell, and leads down to the chambers of death; the serious thought of this could not but check him in his course, and make him resolve upon a better life for the future. Whence we may conclude, that this is the desperate folly of mankind, that they seldom think seriously of the consequence of their actions; and least of all, of such as are of concernment to them, and have the chief influence upon their eternal state. None of these consider what mischief and inconveniency a wicked life may plunge them into in this world; what trouble and disturbance it may give them when they come to die; what horror and confusion it may fill them withal, when they are leaving this world, and passing into eternity; and what intolerable misery and torment it may bring upon them for ever. Therefore would men but let their

thoughts

thoughts dwell upon these things, 'tis not credible that the generality could lead such prophane and impious, such lewd and dissolute, such secure and careless lives as they do, without thought or remorse. But whether we consider it or not, our latter end will come; and all those dismal consequences of a sinful course, which God has so plainly threatened, and our own consciences do so much dread, will certainly overtake us at last; and they cannot be avoided nor prevented, by not thinking of these things. Nothing is more certain than death and judgment, and then an irreverfible sentence will pass upon us, according to all the evil we have done, and all the good we have neglected to do in this life; under the heavy weight and pressure whereof we must lie groaning and bewailing ourselves for ever.

We must also consider our *actions* when they are past; and *by their consequences* judge whether they be good, and according to the rules of the gospel: Such a recollection as this is of great comfort and advantage: if they appear to be good, they become the subject of our joy; and if they are found to be evil, they call us to immediate repentance, and a thankfulness to God that gives us time to reconcile ourselves to his favour. From whence,

We learn the great use of such a consideration; for as every sin must be particularly repented of, before it can be pardoned; so the oftner we call our actions to mind, the better we shall be able to find 'em out, and repent and resolve against the like for the future. And let him who dares to put this duty off, and lie down to sleep before he has done it, remember that dreadful voice, Thou fool, thy soul shall be required of thee this night; and what then will become of the unrepenting sinner?

After they are done.

The frequency of consideration.

Danger of omitting it.

SUNDAY XIV.

- I. Of contentedness, including it's contraries, murmuring, ambition, covetousness, envy.
- II. Helps to and the necessity of contentedness.
- III. Of watchfulness against sin, which includes industry in improving the gifts of nature, fortune and grace, and the danger of idleness, especially in tradesmen and servants.
- IV. Of the power the devil has to tempt mankind, and the means to conquer temptations.
- V. Of those duties which concern our bodies, as chastity, including the several degrees of uncleanness and it's mischiefs both to soul and body.
- VI. Helps to chastity, and means to avoid uncleanness.

I. **A** Nother great proof of our obedience and resignation to the will of God is **CONTENTEDNESS**, or being content with the state of life and such circumstances, in which his divine providence has thought good

Contentedness.

good

good to place us, without murmuring or repining, but cheerfully rejoicing at whatever God pleases to send. And by this we begin to relish the state of just souls made perfect, and subdue many great and troublesome vices. For,

Contrary to murmuring.

In the *first* place this virtue, in which is founded the very ease and comfort of our own souls, takes off all *anxiety* and *murmuring* against God and his wise providence. For contentment includes a respect to divine providence in all our circumstances, and an humble submission to the disposal thereof. After we have used a reasonable industry to attain the necessities of this present life, we ought not to be any further anxious and solicitous about them; but to rely on the providence of God for a continual supply of these things, by his blessing upon our just endeavours, and to be content with what proportion of them he is pleased to bestow upon us in the ways of righteousness. And if we fret, instead of helping ourselves, we, by making him our enemy, increase our difficulties. The reasons or arguments why we ought thus contentedly to rely upon the providence of God, are founded upon these words of our Saviour, Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? He that first gave you life and being, without your contributing any thing towards it yourselves; will he not much more bestow upon you, in the ways of virtue and integrity, things necessary for the support and preservation of that life?

To ambition.

Secondly, It is contrary to *ambition*, which is an unlawful desire of dominion and power, large possessions and profuse living. For the contented person will with pleasure say, Though I have not so large a share as some others, yet have I enough to produce the necessities of life: Though I have not a provision for time to come, yet hath God hitherto given me my daily bread; and what occasion have I to distrust him in his promises? Though I have not enough to gratify every random inclination, yet have I sufficient to supply real necessities: Though some prosper more, yet the distress of others is greater: Though I live more upon Providence, yet have not goodness and mercy followed me? and why should I doubt that in the way of duty they will follow me as long as I live? Though I have not every thing I wish for, yet I have more than I deserve at the hands of God: Though I am really poor, yet poverty has not always the nature of an affliction, or judgment from God; but is rather merely a state of life, appointed by God for the proper trial and exercise of the virtues of contentment, patience and resignation. And again, let us from hence be instructed never to judge of God's love or hatred to persons by the outward circumstances that befall them: let us not conclude, because we are more fortunate in this world than our neighbour, that therefore we are a greater favourite of God than he. Perhaps God meant, that these happy circumstances, as we account them,

them, should be trials of our virtue, and, according as we use them, they should prove a blessing or a curse. If we bear ourselves with an even and composed mind, and make use of those advantages we have above other men for the doing more good in the world than other men, and in the midst of our prosperity neither vainly please ourselves, nor despise others, but walk reverently and humbly with our God in all our conversation, then we have some reason to conclude, that these things are really a blessing to us. But, on the other side, if our prosperity tempts us to pride and insolence, to the forgetfulness of God, and the contempt of men; if we use the advantage of our power to oppress the weak, and of our wit to over-reach the simple, and of our wealth to minister to the purposes of vice and luxury, to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof; then our great successes, by which we measure God's love to us, are not a blessing, but a curse. Such considerations as these are the happy fruits of *contentment*, and must necessarily exclude all ambition from the heart possessed with them.

Thirdly, By this we are enabled also to make a necessary stand against *covetousness*, which is such an inordinate desire of increasing our own

To covetousness.

substance, as tempts us to use the irregular methods of defrauding and deceiving our neighbour. It will be wisdom to be easy, though we should compass no more than a subsistence; for covetousness is never satisfied. Don't we see men arrive at one enjoyment after another, which once seemed the top of their ambition? and yet they are so far from contentment, that their desires grow faster than their substance; and they are as eager to improve a large estate, as if they were still drudging for food and raiment, which are the bounds of our desires. It was against this covetousness, or unbounded desire, that Christ said, Take heed and beware of covetousness; for man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Both reason and religion command a prudent care of our affairs; and a contented mind will not allow us to exceed herein: which we also may do by engaging in more cares than we can manage with composure of mind, or by suffering any cares to run out into anxiety and discontent. Because whoever from desire of gain do drown themselves in such a hurry of business, as is beyond their capacity to manage, defeat their own end, and hurt their souls; not leaving a reasonable time to attend their better interests. Those, that are not satisfied with having acted the prudent part, and to leave the event to God, but torment and rack their minds, about that which is not in their own power, take that thought for the sorrow, which our Saviour has condemned.

The necessity of this virtue; therefore, in opposition to *covetousness*, will yet appear more clear-
upon a due consideration, that covetousness is

Covetousness

contrary to our

duty to God.

contrary

contrary to our duty to God, our neighbour, and ourselves: for as our Saviour tells us, We cannot serve God and mammon: so it is a general observation that a covetous man makes his gain the sole object of his desires, prefers his worldly business to the care of his soul, and will risque his very salvation, by lying, cheating, and neglecting his duty to God, in order to make what, in the eye of the world, is called a good bargain, and sticks at no sin to compass his ends. And

To our neighbour.

In regard to *our neighbour*: Covetousness is a breach both of justice and charity: for he that makes no scruple to offend God, and to neglect the great duties of religion, in order to get money, will never be afraid to trick his neighbour. And as the love of money is the root of all evil, so the man that is swayed with that love, will not scruple to sacrifice both his neighbour's body, goods, and reputation, to gather riches to himself.

To ourselves.

In regard to *ourselves*: Does he not sell his soul for those things, which at last must perish with the body? Yet this is the case of the covetous man who, either by unlawful means, seeketh to heap up riches, or, having this world's goods, sets his heart upon his wealth: for this is the sentence of the apostle; He shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Besides, it is too commonly seen, that he will scarce allow his own body the necessary refreshments and conveniencies of life. Therefore, as we regard our present and future comfort and happiness, it is our duty to seek for the virtue of contentedness, which will guard us against this sin of covetousness, by which our body and soul are brought into misery. Our duty to God and charity to our neighbours induce us to take pleasure in the welfare of others, whether we share in it personally or not. Shall my eye be evil against my neighbour, because God is good to him? Contentment as well as charity envieth not. Whoever is possessed with contentment will not allow himself under any inconveniencies to venture upon the violation of his conscience to remove them; nor mend his circumstances by any acts of fraud or violence, or by making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience towards God or man.

Helps to contentedness.

II. If we observe the various mercies, which actually attend us in every state, they will strongly oblige us to be content. Our circumstances are never so low and uneasy in this world, but there are some mixtures of mercy and favour to be found therein. Though we lose some relation, yet others are left behind. Though we meet with some disappointments, yet are we not quite stript. See if there be no instances of a streighter condition than our own; and it is not ingratitude to God, to overlook the advantageous parts of our condition? Short life, and the approaches of death, speak the reasonableness of contentment with our present station: and view the

the finished misery of sinners, that have shot the gulf, who have not so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues; then say, Wherefore should a living man complain? Anxiety and uneasiness is not the way to amend our circumstances. Discontent is not the way to the favours of Providence, nor leads it to the proper steps for the obtaining our desires, but provokes God to be contrary to us, and discomposes our souls; adds the weight of guilt to any burthen; stops the enjoyment of the mercies we have, and our thankfulness for them; and is the parent of many great sins, and a discouragement to our christian profession in the sight of all men. The apostle had learned to be content, in whatever state he was: not because he could chuse his condition, but because by the grace of God he could be reconciled to any state.

People judge wrong, when they imagine to be assured of content, if they could obtain such a comfort, which their hearts are set upon; for, when they are gratified in their desire, a worldly mind will out-grow their attainments, new wants will start up, and they will be as far from satisfaction as at their first setting out. Variety of worldly goods will not produce contentment; a small uneasiness, appetite or passion not gratified, will take away the relish of what is agreeable in life, if headstrong: and no condition can make us happy, unless a foundation be laid for it in the due regulation of our own tempers. There is no state of life, even the most desirable, but is attended with many peculiar disadvantages of it's own. We often think we see others that are happier than we, and with whom, as to many things, we would willingly change conditions. Are we engaged in a life of action and business? How do we applaud the happiness of those that live in ease and privacy, and can command their own time! Do we, on the contrary, live in retirement, and have but few affairs to mind? Well, then our time lies upon our hands, and we complain for want of employment, and call only those happy that are men of business. Are we in great and splendid circumstances, above the rank of common men? Then we feel the cares and burthens that this brings upon us, and only cry up the secure quiet state of those that live in a lower sphere. But are we, on the contrary, in a low condition? Who then with us, but the great men, that carry the world before them! Thus are we generally unsatisfied with the present condition in which we are, and apt to like any other better than our own. Such is the nature of mankind, or the nature of things themselves, that no earthly delight or comfort can please us long. Therefore let us labour to have our minds content in any state, and endeavour to suit ourselves to any condition, and make the best of it; or else there is no condition, which will not furnish occasions for discontent and uneasiness: and above all, pursue religious courses; for it is written, Seek ye first the kingdom of God; *viz.* not so as wholly to

No real satisfaction without contentedness.

exclude the care of other things; for that is impossible in this present life, and to pretend to it is but enthusiasm, and hinders the spreading of true religion: but seek this chiefly and in the first place; make this your principal and main care; suffer nothing to interfere or come in competition with it: Do this above and before all other things; and yet other things need not to be left undone. Yet,

Diligence. We must never expect to be religious without diligence in the pursuit of virtue. There are in the course of a christian life many duties to be performed, which require pains and care; temptations to be resisted, which will keep us continually upon our guard: and the scripture frequently calls upon us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; that is, with great watchfulness and industry; to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; to follow holiness; to pursue it with great diligence. And this is the very reason why God has so ordained, that there is no employment wherein a man may not perpetually be doing something for the honour of God, for the good of men, or for the improvement of the virtues of his own mind. There is no business, nay there is no innocent diversion, wherein he may not make it his chief and constant care to act always like a reasonable man and a good christian. There is no state of life, wherein he may not keep a constant eye upon a future state, and so use the things of the present world, as that the great and ultimate scope of all his actions may always respect that which is to come. We can get nothing on any other terms; and without this no man shall ever reach the state of eternal bliss. To which end therefore we must use watchfulness and industry.

Watchfulness against sin. III. The duty of WATCHFULNESS requires a constant care of our lives and actions, that we be always upon our guard, that we resist the first beginnings of evil, and discover the first approaches of our spiritual enemy; that we may neither be surprised by his snares and enticements, nor unprepared to encounter him whenever he attacks us. In a word, it consists in wisely foreseeing the dangers that threaten our souls, and then in diligently avoiding the same.

Our duty and interest. The consideration of our own weakness and frailty is an argument to promote our watchfulness, not to mention the fickleness, the treachery and deceitfulness of our hearts, and the malice of the devil, who is very inveterate, and his malice will make him diligent to watch all advantages against us; and his great design will be to shake our resolution: for if that stand, he knows his kingdom will fall; and therefore he raiseth all his batteries against it, and labours by all means to undermine this fort. Therefore the necessity of this duty is visible from the nature of our condition in this world, which is surrounded with variety of temptations; so that there

is no circumstance of life which is entirely free from some sort of assault or other: all our ways being strewn with snares, from the power and strength of the adversary, who is prince of the air, and wants neither skill nor industry to work our ruin; and this is also visible from our own frailty and weakness, whereby we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; and from the danger of our overthrow, whereby we become liable to the miseries of a sad eternity in a place of torment. Consequently, except we are very watchful, we shall unavoidably be made a prey. He therefore that expects God's grace and assistance to keep him stedfast to his resolution, must not neglect himself, but keep his heart with all diligence, and watch carefully over himself: because God worketh in us both to will and to do; therefore he expects that we should work out our salvation with fear and trembling, lest by our own carelessness and neglect we should miscarry, and so become liable to the miseries of a doleful eternity.

This will naturally lead us to INDUSTRY, as well to improve our reason, understanding, and memory, which are the natural riches of the soul, *Industry in improving gifts.* as to cultivate the special graces of God, which are given us for that purpose. For

The *natural* gifts of God are so to be employed, as to promote the glory of God, our neighbour's good, and the salvation of our own souls. And this offers to our consideration these two particulars: *first*, that man should never be idle and slothful, nor intemperate, brutish, nor profane; as all those are who turn their wit to a bad use, would prefer their reason to God's revelation, and load their memories with wicked thoughts, or at the least with frothy romances and idle tales. And *secondly*, that every person that does good to the state of which he is a member, by a faithful administration, or by a diligent discharge of his duty in any office he bears, or any place of trust that he is called to; whoever is serviceable to others, in assisting them with good counsel in doubtful and difficult cases, relating to their souls, bodies, or estates; and whoever is taken up in instructing the ignorant, or in any other such matters, which require the pains of the mind, is so far from being idle, or deserving to be reputed so, or to be looked upon as unworthy of a livelihood, that as his labour is really the most difficult, so it is most useful and profitable to all, as may evidently appear from this reasoning on the contrary part. For,

Whence proceeds so great an increase of the poor of this kingdom? To what are their miseries owing, but to *Idleness brings sloth and idleness?* To the neglect of parents, who took no care to educate them when they were young, in learning or labour, in some honest way of trade or business, in which they might employ themselves, when they are grown up, and be able to provide an honest maintenance. So that

that being grown up, they become what they really are, the very bane and pest of society, wasting and devouring the fruits of the diligent man's labours, robbing those, who are poor indeed, of the charity, which is their due, * and which would otherwise be afforded them, and all the while doing no sort of service to God, their prince, or their country; but what is still worse, spending the time which lies upon their hands, in the most profligate courses of lying, swearing, and drinking, in committing sometimes the most detestable crimes of theft, whoredom, and murder. This should be a warning to all parents, and to such as are intrusted with the care and government of youth, that they improve their minds with sound principles of religion and good morality, and bring them up to learning, or, in some honest trade and employment, † that when they are grown up, they may be able by their own skill and industry to provide a competent maintenance for themselves, and to afford some supply and relief to the real wants and unavoidable necessities of their neighbours. And now suppose a man were born to, or

*Is the root of
all evil.*

has by his industry obtained so plentiful an estate, that if he should take his ease, or indulge himself in sloth and luxury, there would be no danger of his falling into poverty; yet in all probability he would thereby render his condition as unhappy as that of the meanest beggar; he would lose even the taste and pleasure of worldly things, by a too frequent use of them, and would most certainly endanger his health by an idle way of living; for it is known by experience, that ease and sleep, and want of exercise, are the chief causes of most bodily distempers.

Yet of all sorts of idleness, that of *artificers* or *labourers* is surely the most blameable, who loiter away that time for which they

*It's danger to
all servants
and trades-
men.*

receive wages; this is a downright cheat upon those whose business they have undertaken, it is robbing them of their money, and may prove more injurious than common robbery, if the affairs they are intrusted with should miscarry thro' their carelessness. God, who will not suffer the labouring man to be defrauded of his hire, but declares that the cry of such injustice ascends up to him for vengeance, does as much abhor any fraud that is committed on the labourer's part: the apostle therefore commands christians, that no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter: and surely all eye-servants, all who receive wages for their time, if they squander it away in idleness, are guilty of the greatest fraud: but let them consider what the apostle there adds, the Lord is their avenger. What shall we say

* See the duty of *charity* to the poor, page 223, &c.

† See the duty of *parents*, page, 148, &c.

then of those enthusiasts, who neglect and quite lay aside their domestick concerns, their families, their children, or servants, or the employments by which they should get their livelihood, under the pretence of a purer religion? such men certainly do not consider the nature of the christian religion, which is to make men holy in their persons and in their lives, but not in the least to take them off from their worldly callings, or from using those talents, which God hath given them for the benefit of the country where they live; nor do they consider the obligation they have to the publick society whereof they are members, for hereby they are not only rendered useless to the commonwealth, but they do oftentimes a great deal of mischief to it, by unsettling and subverting other men; and filling their heads with abundance of foolish notions and scruples in religion, which are dangerous to government, and the publick peace and happiness. And as for their better serving God, by thus leaving their callings, it is a mere pretence: for he serves God best, who doth most good in the world. On the contrary, the man that serves God by continual application to the duty of his calling and state of life, besides the comfort of a good conscience, which is of all others the greatest happiness, such an honest and industrious labourer may entirely depend upon the goodness of God, that he will always take care of him; God will bless and prosper him in the work of his hands, and stir up the hearts of good men to assist and relieve him; and whenever his strength faileth him, through sickness, old age, or misfortunes, let him not doubt but he shall be provided for in such a manner as shall be best for him.

An argument of enthusiasm.

And opposite to religion and society.

The blessings of industry.

Yet there can be no certainty that God will bless us, except we also grow in grace; therefore, says the apostle, Give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, &c. or improve the grace of God by an industrious and virtuous life, remembering that the more we improve the talent committed to our charge, the more abundance will be given unto us: for it is the gift of God for a man to eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour; such a one reaps the fruit of his pains and industry with a quiet conscience, a pleasure, which the cheat and oppressor are unacquainted with: he is free from contention, from vexations, suits and disturbances; the envy and ambition of others can have no designs, nor take advantage against him who possesseth no more than what he labours for; he is no man's slave or dependant; he is under no temptation to flattery or mean compliances; he need not cringe nor sneak to the wealthy for his bread, who can live upon his own, and is able in some measure to relieve others; and what is the greatest blessing, his continual employment keeps him out

Industry in improving gifts of grace.

of the way of those numerous temptations and occasions of sin, to which idle persons are always exposed. Let then *To improve good motions.* our endeavours be to improve in all sorts of virtue and piety; whoever bend their minds upon heaven are always advancing in paths that lead thereto. They do their duty and strive to perform it after a more perfect manner; they take every opportunity of doing good to the bodies and souls of men; are upon their guard to keep their passions under good government, and ready to obey all the inspirations of the Holy Ghost. For as we shall be answerable for the grace we have neglected, and for not improving what God has blessed us with, let not the Holy Spirit grieve, who is the author of peace and joy, but surrender ourselves obedient to his call. Certainly if we understood the value of the least of his favours, and those good thoughts, which pass unregarded, we should esteem them very highly, and not render them of no advantage by stupid negligence. Take care that every spark of a good thought be blown into a flame, that it may produce a suitable practice in our life and manners. The Lord stands knocking at the door, do not refuse to open and let him into your heart. God bestows his grace in proportion to our use thereof, and a right improvement of the first degree prepares us for a larger blessing from him: to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.

The danger of the contrary. We are taught that God in justice may, and ought to withdraw his grace when wilfully neglected; How then shall we escape? for when man is once deprived of God's grace, he is delivered up to the power of the devil; banished from the sight of God; and bound over to eternal damnation: wherefore it is written, Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

How far hindered by temptation. When an opportunity offers of practising an act of mortification, humility, charity, or patience, &c. you may be prevailed on by a false persuasion, to think that act of virtue cannot be performed at that time; that it is unseasonable, and tho' good in itself, may better be adjourned to another opportunity; and so, instead of complying with that holy motion, which solicits you to good, by listening to the deceit of the evil one, you are diverted from it.

The power the devil has to tempt man. IV. The scriptures indeed teach us, that the devil is always ready to tempt men to sin; yet it is always carefully to be observed, that he can do nothing more but tempt us. He has no power over our persons, or our wills. He can only set before us baits and allurements; but we cannot be hurt by them, except we yield to them and chase them. The treachery and corruptness of our own

hearts within, is much more dangerous than all the assaults of the enemy from without. Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; that is, let no man plead as an excuse for his sin, that God permitted the devil to tempt him into it. For God, as he cannot himself be tempted with evil, so neither tempteth he any man; neither doth he permit the devil to tempt any one further than by laying before him such allurements as 'tis in the person's power, and it is his duty, and it is the proper trial and exercise of his virtue, to resist. But every man is then, and then only, tempted; then only, effectually and sinfully tempted; when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. The enemy of man's salvation can do nothing more, but only entice the covetous with the hopes of gain, puff up the ambitious with expectation of honour, allure the voluptuous with prospects of pleasure, and where the mind is not under the power of any of these corrupt affections, the tempter finding nothing in it, his temptations can take no hold, and his power is at an end. Resist the devil, says the apostle, and he will flee from you. The apprehension therefore that many melancholy pious persons have sometimes entertained of the great power of the devil, is very erroneous and groundless. But 'tis a much greater fault in bad men, to magnify the devil's power, as they are very apt to do, in order to excuse their own crimes: as if, because the devil tempted them to do ill things, therefore the doing those ill things was a less fault in themselves. Which is an error arising from a very false notion of the devil's power of tempting men; it being nothing more, but like that of wicked men's tempting one another. Yet,

We must not rely too much upon ourselves, we *How to guard* must in cases of conscience seek to those, who *against temp-* watch over our souls, the ministers and stewards *tations.* of the mysteries of God. We are all apt to be too partial to ourselves, and are too presumptuous when we lean too much to our own apprehensions, but the guidance of our pastor is one of the means God affords for our improvement, and his assistance is very necessary to preserve us from being imposed upon. Remember that the careless and secure live in continual hazard of their own eternal loss; and that if we would be saved, we must continually watch against all temptations: for the judge of eternal life and death declares, What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch.

V. Having considered those christian virtues, *Duties to our* which in a proper manner respect our *souls*; let *bodies.* us now proceed to those virtues, which in a more particular manner regard our *bodies.*

The first of these duties is the virtue of CHASTITY. *Chastity.* PURITY; because as the apostle declares, He that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

body. This virtue consists in abstaining not only from *adultery* and *fornication*, but from all other more unnatural sorts of it, committed either upon ourselves, or with any other; so that it is a due government of those appetites, which God has planted in us for the increase of mankind, which must be confined within the bounds of lawful matrimony; since any other method of gratifying them is contrary to that purity which the gospel enjoins. And even in that state, men are not to give a loose to their appetites like brute beasts, which have no understanding; but to keep themselves within the modest rules of a marriage state, which being ordained for the begetting of children to be brought up in the fear of God, and for a remedy against sin, and to avoid fornication, so as to keep ourselves undefiled members of Christ's body; nothing must be committed, which may hinder the first reason for marriage; and they who prostitute that holy state to the heightening and inflaming their lust, act contrary to the second reason, which only proposes marriage as the means to subdue lust, and to keep men from any sinful effects of it; for This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication, that every one should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles, which know not God; for God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. Yet in seeing, hearing and touching, many conclude themselves innocent, while free from the lustful deed, and indulges themselves in all liberties short of the last act of uncleanness. But,

*Uncleanness
forbidden in
the very lowest
degree.*

He that suffers his *eyes* to rove, and fixes them upon a forbidden object, will be apt to commit adultery, according to that observation of our Saviour, He that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And we ought rather to cut off our hand than to be guilty of the least uncleanness therewith; neither must we suffer any evil communication to proceed out of our mouth. He that indulges *any* of his *senses*, so far as to excite any desire of forbidden pleasures, defiles his soul therewith. They that would preserve their innocence, must keep their eyes, their ears, and their hands chaste; that is, they must neither look upon, read, hear, nor touch any thing that may inflame or dispose them in any manner to gratify their sinful passions. For,

*The mischief
of it.*

When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and when we are set upon a precipice, corrupt nature pushes us upon the ruin of ourselves. The great neglect of this virtue produces much of that irreligion, which prevails in the world; for if early breaches of innocence had not been made by indulging sinful passions, men's minds would not be so averie from entertaining the principles of religion,

igion, founded in the true reason and interest of mankind: for when the spirit is subdued by the flesh, the obligations of religion begin to lose their force; the means of religion are first neglected, then the principles of it begin to be questioned; and by degrees men are made such slaves to their lusts, *To the soul.* that their recovery is desperate, and they are scarcely awakened to a sense of their follies, till the miseries of a bad eternity drive them, when it is too late, to repent.

Besides, the sinning against our bodies, as the apostle calls it, exposes us to trouble and vexation *To the body.* of mind: for if the unclean sinner has not cast off the fear of God, a virtuous education, God's all-searching eye, from which nothing can be hid, a dreadful judgment, which nothing can turn away, a devouring fire, which must be his portion to all eternity, will continually awaken him to repentance, and fill him with the horror of his sins. And, if he has even stifled the checks of his conscience, the eye of man must still be shunned and avoided; for as bad as the world is, vice has not the current stamp: measures must be concerted, opportunities must be sought for, our best friends must be imposed upon, and every minute we must tremble for fear of being discovered in our vicious habit. It can hardly be expressed what fears crowd upon young persons seduced by this passion, if there be the least remains of modesty and sense of honour left; nay, the anguish of some people's minds upon these occasions has risen so high, that they have made away with themselves to get rid of it's torture. The acute and filthy pains and diseases it brings upon the body, the shame and dishonour which is reaped among men, and the base and dishonourable actions, which are the too common supports of such crimes, may convince the sinner how dearly he purchases the forbidden pleasures of his lustful appetites. For they, who are under the power of these evil habits, know the force of them; and notwithstanding their serious resolutions at some times, the horror of their condition, their uneasiness from the expence that attends their extravagancies, are not able to break their chains. And

To the former mischiefs we must add the judgments *The judgments of God against* of God against this vice of uncleanness; some of the most extraordinary is the destruction *it.* of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from heaven; and the untimely death of Amnon, as also of Zimri and Cozbi, (who were slain in the very act) should deter the most vicious from the evil of their way; and rather, because God, who seeth all things, and hath made man to be the temple of his Holy Spirit, declares, by his apostle, That if any man defile the temple of God, he shall be destroyed. Thus

It is easy to infer the deplorable state of an unclean person, who, being cut off by the hand of *It cuts out from heaven,* divine

divine justice, is *shut out of the kingdom of heaven*, because nothing impure can dwell therein, and consigned to the flames of hell, to be punished for the lustful flames of his flesh.

Helps to chastity.

VI. Perhaps the first motions of our passions may not be under our government, and that we may not be answerable for 'em; but 'tis in our own power to stifle and suppress them, to reject them with horror and confusion, and to apply our minds vigorously upon other objects, which will certainly divert them; because the frame of our nature is not capable of dwelling at the same time entirely upon two things. Wherefore we must take care not to indulge any filthy fancies; we must cast away every scene of lust, that represents itself to us, with indignation; and here our security lies in flight, rather than looking the temptation in the face: And as we must govern our thoughts by looking forward, so we must guard against obscene remembrances of what is past; for this is deliberately to delight ourselves with such follies, in which, it may be, we have been at first engaged by rashness and surprise. The greatest sign of a corrupt heart, is filthy and unclean discourse; therefore we must take care that our speech does not betray the disorder of our hearts, and especially that our words be free from open lewdness, and from any double meaning; and never to make use of words capable of several senses, with a design to create any unchaste thoughts in those we converse withal: nay, we must even avoid conveying any unchaste thought to our neighbour, though we can preserve ourselves from blame, in the way of expressing it: for this manner of offending does most hurt, because the poison is gilded and made palatable; whereas down-right filthy talk shocks at first hearing, and being directly opposite to natural modesty, has not so bad an influence upon the hearers. In reports also concerning others, we must not repeat particulars, as to offend christian modesty; for hereby we contract too great a familiarity with idle discourse, and corrupt the minds of the hearers, by entertaining them with such things which they should never learn, but should forget as soon as they chance to hear them. Filthy conversation is most unbecoming in those who are advanced in years; because it argues a mind extremely depraved, and gives too great a countenance to youthful follies. They that resolve to keep their bodies in chastity, must not pamper them, nor exceed in meat and drink, for which purpose fasting has in all ages been made use of; and among the many reasons that enforce the practice of it, it is not the least considerable, that it restrains the looser appetites of the flesh, and disposes us to sobriety and seriousness; and when we abate of the rigour of fasting, we should not forget to abstain from such food as is most nourishing to the body; for feeding to the full betrays us to loose mirth, and pampers the unhappy disease of our nature, which it is our chief business to cure and overcome.

We

We must also divert our thoughts from dwelling upon forbidden objects; we must do our duty in our proper callings; for, when we are prosecuting any art or science, when we are employed in any innocent business, or any lawful calling, we are not at leisure to entertain thoughts of pleasure; and, as the appetites of our bodies frequently follow the bent of our minds, that which we most think of, we are readiest to do; consequently, our great care ought to be to keep ourselves always employed: if we are engaged in a calling, let us prosecute it with diligence and application: if our condition and quality settles us above a profession, let the care of our own estate, and the acquiring such knowledge as may be serviceable to ourselves and our neighbour, challenge a great share of our time; and by being thus profitably busied, we shall leave no room for the unclean spirit to enter into our soul, and tempt us. The men of pleasure are in the number of those, who know not how to spend their days; and chastity can seldom maintain its ground in an idle soil, but is sacrificed to an enemy always within us, and ready to betray us.

Many men have been ruined by presuming upon their own strength; by running themselves into temptations, which they had the confidence to think they could easily master; and sad experience has convinced them of their error, and want of caution has made them work for repentance, and petition for greater strength. That man is happy, who feareth always, but confidence is the portion of fools. Natural corruption is great, and the violence of our appetites is strong; so that if we give them all the liberty we lawfully may, they'll quickly master us, and snatch at such pleasures as are unlawful. Therefore from a sense of our own weakness, and of the power of temptation, keep at a distance from all such circumstances that may possibly corrupt innocence: trust not thyself in reading books that are framed to raise thy passions; to gaze upon pictures that move thy desires; to converse with company that delight to shew their wit in obscene discourse. Of all passions love is the most dangerous, because the hardest to be conquered. Therefore all kind of intimacies which may fire our passions, are to be avoided, because they insensibly engage our affections; and when they are firmly bent to an object, they seek to gratify themselves by the enjoyment of that object. Nay friendship, when founded purely upon virtue and merit, and the least supported by sense, may in the issue prove fatal and dangerous: for tho' at first we are only charmed with the beauties of the mind, entertained with a good understanding, edified by a modest and virtuous behaviour; yet, by degrees, our admiration and delight in these accomplishments extends itself to the whole person, and the talents of the mind render the body more pleasing and

In case of temptation.

How to avoid lewdness.

and agreeable; so that what begins in the spirit, without care, and the grace of God, may end in the flesh and the lusts thereof.

Use frequent prayer.

Therefore use frequent and fervent prayer. This is the way to procure that grace of God, which is necessary to preserve us from falling, or to recover us, if we fall. It's frequency will fix our minds upon spiritual objects, and fill us with a sense of God's being present every where; an impression which is proper to keep our appetites under government; and it's fervour will make worldly pleasures of less esteem in our affections; therefore we must beg of God, that he would create in us a perfect abhorrence of all impurity; that he would cleanse us from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; that he would set a strict guard on the senses, turn away our eyes, stop our ears, bridle our tongues, and restrain our hands from all uncleanness; that he would give us grace to fly all temptations or opportunities of corrupting our neighbour or ourselves. When impure thoughts are the remains of a bad life, and the punishment of evil habits we formerly contracted, we must endeavour to quench this fire with the tears of repentance for what is past: we must confess before God the impurity of our former lives, and abhor ourselves for those follies, whereby we have offended him; we must beg him to strengthen our resolutions, and in his good time to cast out the remains of the unclean spirit: we must look upon them as a just correction for our former disorders, and submit with patience and humility; saying with Joseph's brethren, We have deserved these things, because we have sinned: and we must the rather apply ourselves to this remedy of prayer, because through its power and strength, all other means become successful and effectual.*

SUNDAY XV.

- I. *Of temperance in eating, with it's ends and rules.* II. *Of temperance in drinking, with it's proper ends and rules.* III. *Of intemperance, and the false ends of drinking.* IV. *Of drinking spirituous liquors, including the degrees of the sin of drunkenness, the great guilt of the strong drinker, the great mischiefs attending it, and the necessity and difficulty of forsaking it; with a caution to young people.* V. *The excuses made by drunkards are no reason to continue in their sin.*

Temperance. I. **T**HE second virtue that respects the right government of the body is TEMPERANCE in eating, drinking, sleep, recreation, and apparel; of which several branches of temperance I shall discourse in order: And

In eating. First, of EATING. We must never indulge our appetites by eating beyond what God and nature has intended for the being and well-being of our bodies; because

* See the duty of prayer and it's efficacy, in Sunday 7.

cause life and health are the foundation of all other enjoyments, and are therefore of greater value than all other possessions put together, because they are necessary in order to the enjoyment of those possessions.

The principal point of wisdom therefore in the conduct of human life is so to use the enjoyments of this present world, as that they may not themselves shorten that period wherein it is allowed us to enjoy them. And if any part of knowledge deserves a steadier attention than other, and has of all others the justest pretence to be esteemed invaluable; it is unquestionably that knowledge by which, as the wise man expresses it, our days may be multiplied, and the years of our life may be increased. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, was the reasoning of the Epicure; but it was very false reasoning, to make the melancholy consideration of the shortness of life an argument for debauchery, when that very debauchery is evidently the cause of making man's life still shorter. Temperance and sobriety, the regular government of our appetites and passions, the promoting peace and good order in the world, are, even without regard to any arguments of religion, the greatest instances of human wisdom; because they are the most effectual means of preserving our being and well-being in the world, and of prolonging the period, and enlarging the comforts and enjoyments of life.

As to the *preservation of life*; It is certain no man can live without eating: for, as physick is necessary to restore us to our former health; so eating is the proper means to cure that hunger which is natural to man, and, if not prevented, must prove his mortal disease. Thus

Eating, you have read, is necessary to preserve our bodily health; and therefore whatever eating is agreeable to these ends of health and welfare of our bodies, is also lawful: but whoever eats with the sole view to please his taste, or, what is more sinful, to excite lust in his own body, he not only acts against his present but future interest: for, by surfeiting and drunkenness many fall into divers diseases, and are brought to untimely deaths.

Therefore, let nobody engorge himself so as to hurt his health; nor must he indulge his appetite with niceness and luxury: for, whoever enslaves himself to his palate, must be sure to do himself hurt by that which God gives him for his good. Consequently, whatever we find hurtful to our health, or that is found common to make our bodies heavy, is to be avoided: for that is fit to nourish some constitutions, which is hurtful to others; and some require such a quantity to preserve their bodies in a regular state, which would draw others from their duty; but most people may judge of this for themselves: temperance obliges every

man ordinarily to abstain from those supports of life, for quality or quantity, which hurt his constitution. And

The danger of high living. They that indulge themselves either in the daintiness or plenty of provisions above their condition and state, are guilty of intemperance, tho' it may not be so accounted in those that can afford it.

Means of it. How unreasonable then is it to risque the good of the whole man, body and soul, to please the palate? They suffer by diseases and anxieties here; and, without timely repentance, must be punished hereafter for their intemperance. The unreasonableness of this sin appears again, if we consider that it's short pleasure is nothing in comparison of it's eternal punishment. Is it not then most shameful, that such as call themselves christians should ever be overtaken with this vice, which levels them to beasts here, and torments them with devils hereafter? Therefore when you eat, take heed to yourselves, that your hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting; and remember that we all stand obliged, by the general precept, not to make provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof: consequently, such studied and customary pleasing of the appetite, as settles the spirit in a sensual frame, or a strong turn towards bodily satisfactions, are not blameless. And frequent and high feasting is dangerous for most people: and tho' I do not say, that all feasting is unlawful, yet I doubt there are few who, like the rich man in the parable, fare sumptuously almost every day, but must confess they put their minds out of frame, give too strong a bent to sensual good, and abate their delight of spiritual comforts. And what shall such unthinking people expect better than, as he did, to want a drop of water to cool their tongue in the next world!

Temperance in drinking. II. We are in the next place to avoid all intemperance in DRINKING: for, as the end of eating is the being and well-being of life; so drinking has the same end, the preservation of life, the repairing of spirits, when wasted with thought or labour, and the fitting and preparing men to go through the business of the station in which providence has placed them: therefore whoever drinks so as to frustrate any of these ends, is guilty of intemperance. Yet it must be observed in general, that the constitutions, ages, and other circumstances among mankind, being so different from one another; nay, the same constitution being so different from itself according to different times and seasons, there can be no one fixed rule or measure in this point; because the same proportion which to one person is not a sufficient nourishment, may to another be excess. So that, what proportion is necessary or convenient, what is within the bounds of moderation, and what not, must in great measure be left to the judgment of every particular christian, upon an honest and conscientious regard to these true ends of drink-

drinking, as well as eating. God hath planted in every man a natural desire of life, and eating and drinking are the only refreshments he has given to support it : but when we speak of the refreshments which nature desires and calls for, we must carefully distinguish between the desires of nature before a habit of intemperance, and after it. Nature, not vitiated with custom or habit, is easy and content with a reasonable and moderate refreshment ; but the cravings of nature under the dominion of habit (if we may then call it nature) are unlimited and endless : the more they are indulged, the more eager they are ; and never cease, till the senses and understanding are drowned. They are as much a disease, as thirst in a fever ; and are no more to be gratified than that is ; nay (if the matter be rightly considered) much less, as that is, at most, attended only with temporal death, and the certain effect of this is death eternal. Therefore it is very sinful in itself, and very ungrateful and unreasonable in us, to suffer an inordinate appetite to turn those very blessings to the destruction of life, which God has graciously given us for the preservation of it. Not as if men were bound to live by weight and measure, or were presently sinful if they go beyond their proportions, which will barely support life : For the great guard and caution which God requires at our hands, is not so much to keep to the nice proportion that will barely preserve life, as to keep from that which will weaken and destroy it : and between the proportions that will barely support nature, and those that will overcharge it, there is a compass and latitude, within which we may innocently enjoy the blessings of heaven. God has provided drinks, as well as meats, in the nature of remedies, to revive and refresh the drooping spirits, and to give new life and vigour to the whole frame : but then we must remember to use them as God intended them ; not so as to lay aside or supersede our natural strength and vigour, but only to assist nature, when we find her faint and drooping. We must not apply these remedies till nature calls for them ; being either in a state of hunger or thirst, or else tired and overcome with thought and labour : nor, when nature does call, must we apply them in larger proportions than she requires, or larger than will fairly answer her needs. And as you have read, that the end of drinking, as well as eating, is to fit and prepare us for the business of the station wherein God's providence hath placed us ; it follows, that one great rule and measure in the enjoyment of those blessings is, to use and apply them in such a manner, as may make them most subservient to the daily business of our calling and profession. And this we do, when in our ordinary course we make the seasons of drinking, as well as eating, what they ought to be, only short retreats from business, and not the business of life ; when we take care, in convenient time, to return to the duties and offices of our calling, and to carry with us sufficient understanding and abilities to pursue

sue it; and when what we call the unbendings of our mind, which may be sometimes necessary, are rare, and without any mixture of riot or excess: for whatever is beyond these, is an irregular and sinful use of God's creatures.

The danger of intemperance. III. By attending to what has been said you will be able to judge, not only what are the proper bounds of sobriety and temperance, and when it is that you exceed those bounds; but also how great and heinous the guilt of that excess is, and it's wretched abuse of the blessings of God, not only in forgetting their proper ends, but in perverting them to ends directly contrary; in turning that to the destruction of life, which God gave for the preservation of it; in making that the means of stupifying the spirits, by which he designed to raise and refresh them; in transforming ourselves into the state of brutes, by the very helps that he bestows for a more vigorous discharge of the duties and offices of a rational creature; and finally, in making that the occasion of indisposing ourselves for the business of life, which God graciously gives to support us under it. Yet

False ends of drinking. From the common and loathsome practice of drinking till men are drunk, it is manifest that they have adopted other ends of drinking than those above recited and warrantable by the law of God. Therefore I shall treat of them in order.

Good fellowship. First, A drunkard pretends that he falls into that excess by *good fellowship*, or keeping another company in that wicked practice. It would be well for such a one to consider, that he may by such height of complaisance, not only bring himself into a bad state of health, (and what is worse, it poisons the soul of man, always deprives him of reason, distracts his brain, and makes him worse than a beast here, and endangers the loss of his soul hereafter) but, as many examples prove, he may be cut off in the midst of a drunken fit.

Preserving friendship. Secondly, Some excuse the sin under the specious pretence of *preserving friendship*. But give me leave to say, this is a mere drunken excuse; for who in his senses can think that he serves his friend by helping him to ruin his estate, his credit, his life, and his soul? Besides, What is more apt to breed quarrels, which are too often attended with blows, and wounds, and murders? for, as Solomon saith, Wine when it is *drunk to excess* maketh bitterness of mind, and causeth brawling and strife.

Chearing spirits. Thirdly, It is also urged by drunkards, that they only drink to *cheer their spirits*, or to make themselves merry. Yet what is the laughter of such, but, as Solomon remarks, madness? they part freely with their reason, health, goods and reputation in this world, and must render

render a sad account for such extravagancies in the world to come.

Fourthly, They who pretend that they drink to *put away cares*, plead for the greatest of all follies, because such a practice cannot keep any considerable cares long out of their mind. Was it ever known that any one that was pursued by publick justice ever sought to conceal himself by getting drunk? And is it not an infinitely greater folly and madness, by surfeiting, drunkenness, and riotous living, to endeavour to stifle the checks of conscience, which pursue the sinner to the judgment-seat of Christ, than by repentance to seek for pardon and forgiveness? And should the cares be only of worldly concern, and such as are fit to be avoided and put away? Has not God in such cases provided and invited us to cast all our cares upon him; and that he will care for us? and shall we prefer drinking to God's assistance? Therefore whoever would not be accounted to have quite cast off all religion and reason, must never have recourse to drunkenness in such cases; because it at once rejects the commandment and providence of God, and loads the conscience with a new crime; which, in sober intervals, redoubles all such cares with greater force.

Fifthly, Idle people too frequently alledge that drinking is a recreation, and serves them to *pass away time*; which, if true, is a caveat against idleness, which is the pretended cause of so great a sin. But if we survey the drunken part of mankind, it will be found to be a very idle excuse; for God's providence has so stationed every man, that no body need be idle, but thro' choice; he may always be employed, for his own benefit, or neighbour's good. And whoever is most at leisure from worldly employment, should be more diligent to resist temptations, and to improve the graces and virtues, which God has bestowed upon him for the edification of his neighbour, and the good of his own soul.

Sixthly, Some so far betray their reason as to pretend that they get drunk to avoid reproach from their drunken companions. Certainly such people forget that drunkenness is a breach of God's commandments; and consequently to be reproached for keeping his commands, is so far from being hurtful, that it brings a blessing upon them; for, as our Saviour declares, Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and say all manner of evil against you for my sake: therefore says St. Peter, If ye be reproached for the name of Christ happy are ye. On the contrary, they who chuse to obey man rather than God, by breaking the vow at their baptism to renounce the world, not only run into many evils in this life, but incur God's displeasure, and the danger of everlasting destruction. And again, Is it not a degree of madness to yield to the reproaches of the foolish and worst of men, and to be deaf to the well grounded reproaches

proaches of the wise and good? But the greatest consideration of all to deter men from this false way of arguing, is that dreadful sentence which Christ has pronounced on all them that disobey him thro' fear of the reproach of men; Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels. Such is the deplorable end of those, who cast off their sobriety, as they think, to avoid scoffs, reproaches, and it may be injuries from men: yet 'tis well known that many, who endeavour to frighten others into the sin of drunkenness by such means, are of all others most ready to scorn and despise those that accompany them in the same excess of drinking. One drunkard is always the object of another's laughter.

Pleasure of the drink.

Seventhly, There are some sort of drunkards, who sot by themselves, and *drink*, as we say, *for drinking sake*; but when a man is so far depraved in his reason, there is more hope of a fool than of him; yet they are generally unwilling to own this. Was not Esau, who sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage, blame-worthy, tho' in need of refreshment? What then can be the hope of such a one who sells his health, reason, soul, and his God, for such drink, which is so far from nourishing, that it only serves to destroy him?

Bargaining.

Lastly, The most common and plausible excuse, which men now a-days make to palliate this sin of drunkenness, is the *necessity*, they say, men are under in *driving bargains*, or in the way of trade. It is true that such a wicked practice has been introduced by designing and crafty men, who endeavour to defraud or over-reach those with whom they traffick: and therefore it is so far from losing of its malignity, that the very intention of taking an advantage of another, made drunk for that purpose, is a great aggravation of the crime. Besides, how can any one presume so much upon his own head, but that he may be first intoxicated, and then be subject to the very deceit he proposed to impose upon the dealer?

Of drinking spirituous liquors.

IV. Thus far *intemperance in drinking* has been considered in general, without any distinction of various *liquors* by which it is occasioned: But that of *spirituous liquors* deserves our peculiar consideration.

Nothing can be more clear in reason than the quick tendency of those liquors to shorten and destroy life; not only by depraving the appetite, and drawing on a disrelish of wholesome nourishment, as experience shews; but also, as physicians assure us, by hardening the provisions that are sent into the stomach, and thereby hindering the operations of those helps, which God has provided for a regular digestion, and for a kindly conveyance

of nourishment to every part; *besides* the other fatal effects, which are charged upon them by physicians; as palsies and apoplexies, from their operation upon the brain and nerves; and of jaundices and dropsies, from their operation upon the bowels. *Again*, The seeming relief that our spirits receive from the liquors which we are now speaking of, is not only of short continuance, but frequently runs into frenzy and madness; inflaming instead of comforting; intoxicating instead of enlivening. And as, through such a violent and precipitate consumption, the spirits they give are soon spent; so do they leave the body vapid and lifeless, and under an eager longing after a speedy recruit from those artificial aids, which are only so many steps to the grave; and do, in truth, deserve no better name, than a slower kind of poison. And, *lastly*, It cannot be but that they must by the same degrees impair the strength, and enfeeble the constitution, and make the whole man weak and listless; less willing to set about his business, and less able to go through the labour and fatigue of it. Thus it must be in nature; and thus it is daily seen to be in experience and observation. And though persons in the married state may not be enough concerned about the mischiefs they do to themselves, they are to be put in mind, that in them it is not only irreligious, but unnatural and cruel, to have no sense or feeling of the weaknesses and infirmities, which they are entailing upon their innocent offspring: especially, when the temptations lie so much in every one's way; and when the appetite is gratified and the brain intoxicated at so easy an expence; and when, by a little indulgence, the cure becomes so very difficult. Such considerations, one would hope, should of themselves, and without any other enforcements, be effectual warnings to all parents and masters, to use the utmost watchfulness, over those who are under their care, that none of them be ensnared by these temptations into the beginning of a distemper, which, when begun, is so hard to be cured. Consequently,

Having answered all the common excuses *Degrees of* made for this sin of drunkenness, it will be necessary in the *next* place to shew what are the *degrees* of it. And here they deceive themselves, who think that a man is only to be accounted a drunkard, when he is so drunk as not to be able to go, stand or speak: for every lower degree of drinking, that makes a man very dull, ridiculous, or unfit for employment, or full of rage and fury, or makes any change in the man, and which exceeds the natural end of drinking and moderate refreshment, is the sin of drunkenness; which ought to be well considered by those, who spend great part of their time in alehouses or taverns, at friends or in their own houses, in drinking: for though their constitution be so strong, as to preserve their wits: yet their crime is not the less, when the same time

time is employed in the work that has made another drunk. Do not reckon, that your enjoyments are therefore innocent, because you are able to go away with a tolerable share of reason and understanding, which in many cases is owing only to custom or an uncommon strength of nature; but rest assured, that all indulgences of this kind, more than what nature fairly requires, and more than what are a real refreshment to body and mind, without prejudice to health or business, are very sinful in the eyes of God, and lay men under the same condemnation in kind, though not in degree, as drunkenness itself does. Therefore whatever we find hurtful to our health, or that is found commonly to make our bodies heavy, is to be avoided.

Of the great guilt of strong drinkers.

From these foregoing considerations we may easily collect the *great guilt* of those, who, instead of refreshing and relieving nature, abuse and mis-spend, what God in his providence has given us for good ends; and as we must one day account for such abuses, so the longest drinker will fall into the greatest guilt. To this we may add the mis-spent time and drunkenness of those in our company; especially if we strive to make them drunk, and triumph over their infirmity, and value ourselves upon it, we are guilty of a most horrible wickedness. They therefore who take a pleasure to fuddle others, would do well to consider the woe which God has denounced against so vile a practice. Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink; that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also! for this is a dear price for so short and foolish a pastime.

The great mischief of this sin.

Thus you have been informed of the sinfulness, the motives to, and the degrees of, the sin of drunkenness; a most shameful abuse of God's blessings, and of human nature. And I have been the more particular in the describing of this vice, as it is a sin of which scarce any condition, age or sex among us is free; though it is certain that there is no sin which is more destructive to the understanding, health, reputation and estate of those that fall into it; and, according to the different constitutions of men, it usually produces, in some, a spirit of rage, and passion, and cruelty; in others, sullenness, obstinacy, and ill-nature; and in most, great folly and indecency in words and actions. It is with regard to the heinousness of this sin that the prophet Isaiah so solemnly denounceth woes and judgments against it: Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them! and again, Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink! And in the New Testament, the christians guilty of this vice are ranked amongst the most abominable sinners, and adjudged to the

the heaviest punishments, even the exclusion from the kingdom of God.

Let as many therefore as have already indulged themselves into a habit, stand still, and consider, that they are in a state of the worst kind of slavery; a slavery of reason to appetite, a slavery of the human to the brutal part. And let them resolve, once for all, to assert the freedom and dignity of their nature, and that, though they have lived like beasts, they will die like men. Let them, in a religious way, look back and see how they have abused the blessings of God to luxury and excess, and with how much goodness he has borne with their provocations, and waited for their amendment; and let a sense of his mercy and their own vileness, breed in their hearts that godly shame and sorrow, which worketh repentance to salvation: Or, if neither the force of reason nor religion will do, let the terrors of the Lord persuade them not to trifle away their souls, by continuing in a course, which they know must end so shortly in eternal destruction.

If they say it is a difficult work, the proper answer is, that it is a necessary work; and if men will but think, it can bear no long consideration, whether they shall be uneasy now or miserable for ever. Where that is the choice, the true inference from the difficulty of the work is, to rouse themselves to equal degrees of resolution to go through it; and the more sensible they are of their own weakness, the more earnest ought they to be in their prayers to God, to strengthen and assist them. Therefore take heed of giving way to intemperance when it first appears; for it insensibly steals on to higher degrees, and grows upon those who give it admission. I could recount sad instances of persons, in appearance, of the strictest sobriety and regularity, who, from small beginnings, not restrained at first, have sunk into fortifness, and been entirely lost to the world and themselves, and consequently to God. It is a vice that eats like a canker, and too often increases with age, which should make young people cautious of the least degree thereof. And it's proper antidote is not to be betrayed into it, but to keep the reins over the appetite from the beginning; and to accustom it to frequent restraints, that it may know it is always under government, and so be tame and tractable; Or, in the language of St. Paul, in this very case, to keep under the body and bring it into subjection, to keep up in our souls the life and power of religion, that our time and thoughts be well employed, that we may not be under the temptation of having recourse to sensual indulgences to pass away our leisure hours. And,

V. When christians have taken all these methods to avoid intemperance in meat and drink, they will be convinced that neither

ther long custom nor engaging company will be able to resist the more powerful grace of God working in a repenting heart. Who would not refrain drinking by the advice of a physician, when he tells us it would endanger life? And can it be supposed that the dread of death eternal, pronounced against great drinkers, is not sufficient to reclaim them, that duly consider their great danger? For although persons in this condition may be brought to acknowledge, that it had been happy for their body and soul, if they had fallen at first into a sober and regular course; yet now, as custom has made such indulgences necessary, and nature can hardly subsist without them, they think that they may innocently go on, and that to part with them is to part with life. To these I would observe, that although custom is very powerful, yet it has not force enough to make that necessary to nature, which of itself is destructive to nature; as all excess most assuredly is, whether with or without custom. So that, what they say is necessary to preserve life, is in truth only necessary to quiet a craving and inordinate appetite; the gratifying of which is at that very time the direct and immediate means of destroying life. And as to the present uneasiness, it is no wonder that an appetite unaccustomed to denials, and which has long been gratified to the full, should be so uneasy under the first check or restraint. But if there is steadiness and resolution enough to maintain the restraint for a little time, the appetite by degrees will grow more patient and quiet; and they will find far greater pleasure in governing, than ever they found in indulging it.

Want of employment.

To the foregoing we may add another difficulty in the forsaking the crime of drunkenness, which is an *indolent idle life*. For many, who, as they term it, can live on their substance, or upon credit, abhor the thoughts of work, and give themselves up to drinking, which at last becomes their trade and business. Let them therefore seek for a suitable employ in their way of life, and be diligent in their proper stations, and neither those that must live by their labour, nor others in easier circumstances, will ever

Persuasion and reproaches of men.

spend their time in drinking. It may be, that a good resolution of forsaking the wretched custom of drinking may be attacked by the *persuasions* and even *reproaches* of old pot-companions: but they who resolve to become temperate must foresee and expect, and therefore prepare against, such temptations; and they will be the better able to resist, by considering how much the everlasting kindness of God is to be preferred to the friendship of men, and whether the reproach of wicked men be so terrible as that of a guilty conscience, and the eternal confusion of an unrepenting sinner at the last day.

There

Therefore give not the least way to any of their *Reject these* temptations; for if a penitent once gives ground, *temptations at* he certainly loses the victory. For by returning *the very begin-* to the company of drunken companions, he *ning.* throws himself into the way of sins, and they seldom fail by force or intreaty to drown his sober resolutions with a flood of excess. Consequently, the greatest security lies in this, to reject the first occasions of *The security of* this sin: and openly to declare our purposes of *doing so.* living a sober life for the future, that men may be discouraged from attempting any future conquest. For if men suffer themselves to come into the way of excess, or go too near the brinks of it, they will frequently lose the reins, and be plunged in un-awares. So that there is no way to be safe and innocent, but to keep an habitual guard and restraint upon the appetite; and, together with these considerations, there must be frequent and earnest prayer to God, that he will preserve upon the mind a lively sense of them, and graciously afford such supplies of grace and strength, as he sees needful, to prevent those evil habits, and to give an effectual check to all such acts of irregularity and excess, as naturally lead to them. And,

Whoever sincerely thus applies his heart to for- *The efficacy of* sake and avoid this sin, cannot fail of a conquest. *these means if* The impossibility therefore of breaking off a long *not hindered by* habit of drunkenness is no excuse, but rather a *the love of sin.* proof of a false heart, that rather chooses to continue in sin, than to be at any pains to overcome it.

Another excuse, which is too common among *Which love* drunkards, is the plea of custom and general *makes a man* practice: and from thence it is pleaded, either that *loth to believe* such a life is harmless to the body, or at worst but *it dangerous.* a sin of infirmity, not sufficient to debar any one from heaven. But it may as well be urged, that there is no heaven, as that drunkenness will not exclude us from it; for drunkenness is numbered by the apostle among those sins, which they that commit shall not *inherit the kingdom of God.*

SUNDAY XVI.

- I. Of time, *how to be spent.* II. Of sleep, *showing it's end and rules, and the mischiefs of sloth.* III. Of recreations, *how and when allowable; with the sin and danger of common gaming.* IV. Of temperance in apparel, *showing the use of apparel, and the danger and folly of fashions.* V. Of CHRISTIAN fortitude or patience, *and it's necessity and usefulness in all states and conditions of life.* VI. Of self-denial, and mortification. VII. Of zeal, *both in a good and bad sense, and how to be practised.*

I. THE

Time. I. **T**HE time which God has given us for working out our salvation, is more valuable than can be expressed; on the spending whereof depends our happiness or misery to all eternity: which consideration should put us upon all those methods, whereby we may employ it to the best advantage of our souls. There is little of it at our disposal; what is past is slipped from us; the future is uncertain; the present is all we can call our own, which is yet continually passing away: in which, though the season of working is so very short and uncertain, we have an affair of the greatest consequence to secure, which requires the whole force and vigour of our minds, the labour and industry of all our days, and not to be dispatched with any tolerable comfort upon a sick bed; nor in the evening of our lives, when our strength and our reason are departing. Therefore if we persist in an obstinate neglect of all the repeated tenders of God's grace, the things that belong to our peace may be hid from our eyes; so that all the time we can reserve from the necessities of nature, and our worldly affairs, which those necessities engage us in, ought to be applied to the noblest purposes, the glory of God, and the good and salvation of mankind; as-

How to be spent.

signing to all our actions the proper seasons, and such a portion of our time only as may be necessary for them; whereby time will never lie upon our hands, nor sting us with remorse when it is gone. We are naturally active beings, that must be employed one way or other: we have a mind within us that will be always in motion; and this being the state of that active principle, that constitutes us men, we had need take great care to keep it employed in what is honest, just and good. The soul will find something or other to work upon, and if it be not employed about what is honest and lawful, it will quickly divert the current of it's motion, and exert it's activity upon dishonest and unlawful things. Since the fall of man, God hath placed the generality of men in such circumstances, that some honest calling, with diligence and industry therein, is indispensably necessary to their comfortable maintenance; and he hath so taken care to intercept our minds, that they may not fly off from the pure acts of religion into their contraries, and that when they are not better, they may be innocently employed; and hath taken a wise course to confine and bound the soul from making incursions into sinful and prohibited actions: yet not obliging us to be so industrious as to deny ourselves moderate refreshments or recreations, which are not only useful, but sometimes necessary to our spirits, after they have been stifled in a crowd of business.

God does not deny us refreshments.

Of sleep.

II. Therefore we shall now consider the *third* part of TEMPERANCE, which is SLEEP. This is to be measured by the rule of God's ordinance, who gave

us sleep, to refresh and support our minds and bodies, when wearied with toil and trouble, to repair the decay, and to enable them the better to perform their religious duties. So that it must be always remembered that this gift of God is for us to profit thereby, and not to make us idle and slothful. Consequently,

Tho' it is not possible to describe the *limited* time every person may sleep; because, as meat and drink, so sleep must be proportioned to the constitution of every body; yet let no one fall into the crime of Solomon's sluggard, who after a seasonable refreshment cries, A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep. Because

It draws us into several *other sins*, as waste of time, filling the body with divers diseases, and dulling the faculties of the soul; and so crosses the end of our creation, which is to serve God in an active obedience, or a constant discharge of our duty in that state of life we are placed in by his providence. And

Besides the *sinfulness of sloth*, it will cover a man with rags: let him be in what state of life soever, poverty will overtake him, till he is destitute of convenient cloathing. And as sleep is a kind of death, he that indulges himself therein to excess, may properly be said to lay violent hands upon himself, and to anticipate God's appointed time. Thus also,

III. To what has been said of sleep, we may add a *fourth* part of TEMPERANCE in RECREATIONS; for, we must not turn our physick into food, and make that our business, which should be only our diversion: For tho' a serious christian may sometimes and at some seasons, use the common games for the relaxation of his mind, and to oblige and divert his company; yet every sober man is to take care, that this liberty does not exceed the bounds of an innocent recreation: for instance, that he do not set his affections too much upon it, or play with such concern as to be put into a passion at his bad success; that he sits not too long at it, nor comes to it too frequently; that he always prefers his necessary business before his diversions; that he so orders his recreations of this kind, as that they render him the more fit to spend his other time the more usefully; and lastly, that he play not for money, but for diversion; at least for no more money than what he can very well lose without the least discomposure of mind, and without the least prejudice to his family or estate. Thus far, I say, and with these restrictions, to use play is innocent enough. Our recreations also must be short, and refreshing, and must never be permitted to steal away our minds from the duties of our calling and election in Christ Jesus. For so far as our sports exceed the measures ne-

And the rule of temperance therein.

The many sins that follow the transgression of it.

Other mischiefs of sloth.

Cautions to be observed in them.

cessary and convenient for our bodies, they are unwarrantable encroachments upon our religion and calling. But

The sin and danger of common gaming.

Here is the misery; there is a sort of men who even make a trade of gaming, whensoever they can find out company to their purpose; but who-soever makes this his way of living, has a sad account to make to God Almighty. Can there be a worse consumption of our time, or a greater abuse of our talents, than to put both of them to no greater use than throwing a dye, or turning a pack of cards, especially when it is attended with indecent and impetuous passions of all sorts, execrable oaths, imprecations, lyes, cheats, coufenages, and brutish quarrels and contests? and as if damning their souls were not enough, How many thousand estates have been broken and ruined? How many families, wives and children, hath it reduced to the extreamest degree of poverty and contempt? nay, to an untimely end; whether by poison, or a quarrel, or the gallows?

Undue ends of sports.

And as we are not to propose any other end to our recreations, than a *bare relaxation of our tired spirits by moderate refreshment*; so our great care in them must be always to use 'em only at such times when they can't properly be said to fall in with any part of our duty to GOD or our neighbour; because time is given us, in the first place, to make our calling and election sure: so that they are highly culpable, who spend whole days and nights at cards and dice, or other idle pastimes, or thro' an avaricious temper make a trade of gaming; and so cheat, and when provoked stain their souls with fury, rage, swearing and cursing, as woeful experience too often shews. Such a gamester flakes his soul which is of too great a value to be ventured at such a rate, and instead of recreations loads himself with the greatest vexations; for the fears and desires of the covetous, and the impatience and rage of the angry man, are more real pains than the most laborious work in the world. Yet

Chearfulness recommended.

We should endeavour also to keep up a constant *chearfulness* of spirit. They disgrace religion who pretend that it is an enemy to mirth and chearfulness, or imagine it to be a severe exacter of thoughtful looks and solemn faces; or that men are never serious enough till they are sullen, or shut up from all company and recreations. For so long as we keep within the bounds of sobriety, and do not fall out into malicious, scurrilous, or prophane jesting, our religion does not only wink at our mirth, but approves thereof. Chearfulness is nature's best friend; removes it's oppressions, enlivens it's faculties, and keeps the spirits in a brisk and regular motion, and renders it easy to itself, and useful and serviceable to God and our neighbour; dispells clouds from the mind, and fear from the heart; kindles and cherishes in us generous affection

and composes our natures into such a temper, as is of all others the most fit to receive religious impressions and the breathings of the Holy Spirit. Whereas *melancholy* naturally represses the Spirit of God, and disturbs his working within us; overwhelms the fancy with black vapours; and clouds and darkens the understanding; distracts the thoughts, and renders them wild, roving, and incoherent; makes them unfit for prayer and consideration, and renders them deaf and unattentive to all the good motions and inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

Melancholy prevents the good influences of the Spirit.

IV. *Lastly*, We must also be temperate in APPAREL. This is a duty that becomes us as we are rational creatures, but more especially as members of the christian church; for as much as we are strictly obliged to avoid all kinds of excess, and in particular to put on modest apparel. If men are guilty of excess, the dignity of their sex increases the fault, and makes it unpardonable: nature having designed them for the noblest employments, they undervalue themselves in studying dress and ornament; and betray such a degeneracy of Spirit, as exposes them to scorn. Besides, this extravagancy in either sex is destructive of the publick welfare. The lawful use of apparel appears by considering the ends for which cloathing is appointed; which is a covering from shame, to defend us from the injuries of the weather, and to distinguish the orders and degrees of men; if which ends, they were attended to, many would reduce themselves into an homelier dress, who make so gay an appearance in the vanity of rich habits, and strain both their purses and consciences to purchase them.

Temperance in apparel.

The lawful use of apparel.

The first design of apparel having been, as we read in Genesis, to cover the nakedness of our first parents, whose shame was the effect of the sin by which they brought death into the world; we should be so far from delighting in apparel unbecoming us, that it should be a constant check against all other offences; and teach us never to covet better apparel than will serve to cover us decently. Yet many christians will comply with every fashion, and suit their drels to all changes; so much that by drels and habit there is no distinguishing an honest woman from a common prostitute: but with discreet christians it ought to be otherwise; they are bound to abstain from all appearance of evil, to avoid all approaches towards it, and deny themselves the use of such ornaments and forbear such gestures, which give ground of suspicion to the censurer, or whereby themselves may be tempted to pride, or their admirers to the lusts of the flesh. But they are always guilty of excess in their apparel, who have neither quality nor any good design to justify the wearing thereof;

Apparel designed for covering from shame.

The folly and danger of fashions.

thereof; who propose no other ends but to set off their *beauty*, or to make such a figure as may deceive the world into a false opinion of their *greatness* and *honour*, to which they have no title; and they are as much exalted with it, in their own vain conceit, as if they had gained some real worth or power; as their haughty looks, their insolent and scornful behaviour plainly shew: which verifies the wise man's observation, A man's attire, excessive laughter, and gait, shew what he is. Gay apparel has ever been observed to corrupt men, putting those upon extravagancies, who are otherwise sober and industrious; and though some are so much masters of themselves as to retain their innocence with it, yet frequently it tempts to sin, kindles lustful desires, and is too often worn for that very design. The over curious in adorning the body commonly neglect their better parts; though they shine in the eyes of men, their soul remains in darkness, in gross ignorance of their duty, or defiled with pride, and all manner of uncleanness. They not only employ their thoughts, but their time also, in this vanity; they spend so much at their glass, or in the dressing-room, or in making a shew of themselves to company, that there is none to spare for performing the offices of religion and virtue.

Excess in apparel dangerous, and sinful.

Loose dress is destructive to many christian virtues; such as charity, which suffers much thereby. Those who are so much taken up with love and admiration of themselves, have little disposition to consider the streights and hardships of other men; they can easily overlook their neighbour's poverty, and despise him for it: the most distressed object moves no compassion in them; but under this sense they can hide themselves from their own flesh: nay, it is well if they do no more than so; for, such as will pinch their bellies and starve their families to feed this vanity, are too often known to lie in wait, and catch the poor, when they can draw them into their net by any indirect means. They who think rich apparel becomes them well, and that much happiness consists in it, having no estates to support it, will stick at no villany whatsoever to gratify their pride. What shall we say of those who run deep into the tradesmen's books, without any possibility of paying them; to which is owing the ruin of many families? Is not their dress a load of sin? What can be said by way of excuse for those, who are fine at their neighbour's cost, by means that are not very easily discovered; where bribery, extortion, breach of trust, and deceit in dealings, must bring in the supplies for their maintenance in apparel? This must of necessity bring many into streights and difficulties, who are immediately taught by the devil to lay the blame of their credit, sunk and lessened by this kind of profuseness, upon the times, the decay of trade, and scarcity of money; as the times of the greatest plenty can witness: since it is impossible
for

for art or industry, or the most gainful returns of trade, to answer all the demands of luxury and pride.

The *second* end of apparel being to *defend us from the injuries of the weather*, we ought only to wear such cloathing as shall be necessary to keep us from cold, and preserve the health of our bodies. They therefore are guilty of intemperance in apparel, who take such pride in their cloaths, as, by regarding the fashions, to neglect and even prejudice their health; in which cases cloathing is so far from being a benefit, that it hurts the body. But lest it should be understood that I would countenance those, who, out of a covetous temper of hoarding up riches, deny themselves the conveniencies of life, and contend it is utterly unlawful to comply with the innocent and becoming fashions of their country, or to lay out any thing more upon cloathing, than what is just necessary or sufficient to cloath them; who arraign those of pride and wastefulness, who put on ornaments suitable to their rank and quality, and such as their circumstances in the world will justly and honestly afford them: I say, these pretended scrupulous notions are not the fruits of christian instruction, but the signs of a narrow spirit; so that when they are taught for religious doctrines, they are no better than superstitious impositions, like those of the judaizing christians, who said, Touch not, taste not, handle not; putting a restraint upon men in those things which God and the laws of their country give them liberty to enjoy. Yet we must take care, lest, under the pretence of liberty, we go beyond our rank and degree, and despise those, who either thro' choice refuse to come up to the same excess, or whose circumstances will not allow them to do it: we must also shun all those loose kind of dresses, as have a natural tendency to raise lascivious and wanton thoughts.

Thirdly, we have said that *dress* was intended to distinguish the orders and degrees of men; and this both in respect of sex and quality: For, all nations have assigned a distinction of cloathing between man and woman, even as the Lord commanded the Jews, that one sex should not wear the dress of the other. And in regard of men's quality, we may observe, that it is not blamed, but asserted, that they who wear gorgeous apparel live in kings courts: So they who excuse the vanity of rich apparel by their birth and quality, who are in kings courts, who are about their prince, or have derived honours from him, have the best pretensions to it; but the noblest persons ought to consider, that there are many better ways than this of distinguishing themselves, and commanding the respect and observance that is due to them: there are many duties, which lay claim to their wealth; many great and generous actions are expected from them, as they are christians: they are bound to remember, that by a solemn vow at their baptism they

renounced the pride of life under the name of the pomps of the world: tho' pride is not the necessary effect of rich ornaments: for many wear them with no other design than to keep up to their rank and dignity, that they may not appear covetous, nor seem to affect a greater pride in going beneath their station. Men and women, in every state and condition of life, should never strive to exceed their fellows, much less their superiors, in the way of dress: for, if we believe every man's portion to be allotted by God's providence, and that all things shall work together for good to them that fear him, we shall be easily satisfied with the condition he has put us into, and shall like every thing that is suitable or belonging to it: for what God has appointed must be the best for us; and, how mean soever it be, we have no reason to be ashamed of it, since he is the great Lord and sole disposer of all things that we can enjoy. Mean and plain apparel is as becoming in a low estate, as a richer dress would be in a higher station: he who disdains the one, would be as proud of the other. Therefore let us not mind high things, but let us condescend to men of low degree; that is, conform our way of living to our circumstances; be content, and boast not of gay cloathing nor raiment: consider there is nothing in them to value ourselves upon; they answer well the uses which God designed them for; to defend us from the weather, or to cover our nakedness; but it is folly to boast of that which owes it's value to our shame, weakness, or natural necessities.

*Too much
sparing is as
great a fault
as excess.*

Now to prevent any misapplication of these several rules of temperance, I must observe, that they in no wise countenance the vice of *avarice*, or *covetousness*: for, whoever denies his body the necessities of life, in his station, ability and quality, sins against the goodness of God, by robbing his back to fill his purse. The like may be urged against the slavish life of those, who moil and toil day and night, and for the sake of what they never enjoy themselves, nor have a heart to do any good with, deprive their bodies of their nourishment, competent time of sleep, and necessary recreation. Therefore the covetous man is not a temperate man; because it is not in regard to the duty of temperance, but an inordinate desire of riches, which is the root of all evil, that makes him refrain, and to sacrifice his health, peace, conscience, life and soul, to save his purse.

Christian fortitude and patience.

V. To the foregoing virtues of temperance we may add those other duties of *christian resolution*, *patience* and *self-denial*: Of which in order; and

First, Of christian FORTITUDE or PATIENCE. This duty is exercised in bearing present evils, or waiting for future good, and the future blessed state of immortality. It is a disposition of mind which keeps us calm and composed in our frame, and steady in the practice of our duty, under the

sense

sense of afflictions, or in the delay of our expectations. And it is this patience with which Christ exhorts his disciples to possess their souls, after he had foretold them the sufferings and dangers they would be exposed to in the course of their ministry and christian warfare; and in them instructs us, that in every circumstance that tends to discompose us, we must always shew ourselves men, by permitting reason and grace to have the upper hand.

Diseases, pains, loss of friends, ingratitude, dis- *W by necessary.*
appointments in our affairs, and all the various troubles to which man is born, fall to the lot of the good as well as the wicked. For, as the deceitfulness of riches blinds men's eyes, the pleasures of life steal from them their understandings; power is very apt to lead them into ambition and tyrannicalness; plenty, into intemperance; and continued prosperity, into a careless spirit, and into a neglect and forgetfulness of God: so afflictions of all kinds, though for the present they cannot but be grievous, have naturally a tendency in the end to lead men into sober thoughts, and considerate counsels; to wean them from the numerous vanities and follies of the world; and to amend the habit and temper of their minds, by addicting them to the expectation of a better and more lasting state. Do not therefore conclude, because God suffers thee to fall into many difficulties and afflictions; because thou art pressed with hard and pinching circumstances; because thou art visited with sad and grievous losses, or with long and painful sickness, or with the death or miscarriage of thy nearest relations, or the like heavy misfortunes: do not, I say, conclude from hence, that God is angry with thee, or that he hath no kindness for thee: The best of his children he thinks fit to exercise in this way, for the trial and improvement of their virtue, for the exercise of their patience, for the correction of their faults, and for purging them, that they may bring forth more and more fruit, till we arrive at eternal rest and glory: which glory we can no more inherit without patience, than without an unfeigned faith and repentance. Yet

We are convinced by observation, that few bear afflictions with due resignation: for, the man *In all states and conditions.*
who is touched in his reputation, declares how willingly he would submit to any other affliction that could befall him, but is not able to bear injurious reflections: The man who is confined to his bed, complains that his distemper makes him impatient and discontented, and prevents the practice of several good works he designed, if free from his illness. Again, we may observe a woman with a perverse husband, and disobedient children, declaring that she would suffer willingly any other affliction, except that which lies upon her; which she imagines can only serve to increase her misery both in this and the next world. And indeed every body seems willing to exchange their present cross for another, and most think themselves unhappy

happy in the particular sort of their sufferings; which discontent renders their minds always unquiet, and their management unreasonable: for, without doubt, God sends or permits that affliction; it does not spring out of the ground; we must not determine what God ought to do to us. It is able, in truth, to draw tears from one's eyes, seriously to reflect upon the sad, deplorable, calamitous condition of a great part of mankind in this world; to exhibit to our minds that dismal scene of things that are every day presented to our eyes. Here are some languishing under a long and tedious distemper, unfit for all the functions and incapable of any of the enjoyments of life: others roaring out for the extremity of torture they suffer from the stone, or the gout or an ulcer, or a broken limb, or some such other tormenting accident: others mourning for the loss of a dear parent, on whom they depended; or the death of a child, who was the stay and comfort of their age: others fretting and fuming for the disgraceful circumstances they are fallen into from an high fortune: others even heart-broken, for the poverty and necessity to which they are reduced through the profuseness of their lives, or the misadventures of trade, or the ruins of a fire, or the calamities of a war: others groaning and howling under the whips and stings of an awakened conscience, being filled with horror and amazement, and despair from the sense of their crimes, and the apprehensions of the vengeance of God in the other world; yet we ought not to prescribe to him the particular cross he shall lay upon us. Such thoughts must be banished from our mind, and we must receive the cross which he sends us, with submission; and tho' it be not what we would have chose for ourselves, we must obey: it is sufficient that it comes from God. Therefore

It must be persevering. Let us be careful that the exercises of it be *lasting*; that it be a fixed habit, and not by starts; in great, as well as in less trials; and in small as well as in great; for sometimes impatience breaks out upon trifling occasions, after long patience in great and shocking calamities: and let it be unconquerable in uncommon trials, as well as in those to which we have been used. Happy will it be, if our Master finds us in such a frame at his coming, whenever it shall be that he calleth us to render an account of our thoughts, words, and deeds.

The consequences of impatience. Such patience as this is its own reward, and *impatience* is its own punishment; because it lays aside the man, and sets up the brute or the devil; leads us to act a foolish or an outrageous part, and instead of abating, increases our sufferings. Our burden is lightened by patience; whereas impatience, which pierceth the heart through with so many sorrows, doubles it. Complaints, murmurings, impatience and discontent, offend God, and rob us of the profit and advantage of our sufferings for his name. They that submit

submit with resignation, their virtue encreases; but they that murmur, their sufferings only serve to increase those that are reserved for them in the world to come. Therefore bear with patience, and do not make yourself doubly miserable. It is scarce credible, that any man can be hardy enough to complain against God, or dare to find fault with that providence he ought to adore and be thankful for; yet some insinuate that he is severe; that he seemeth to abandon us; that they do not deserve the treatment they receive. And some carry their discontent so high, as to break out into desperate expressions. Such people can never be convinced, that God is a kind and indulgent father, who chastises his children for their good; that he is a charitable physician, who prescribes bitter and distasteful remedies for the recovery of their health; and consequently live without faith, without which there is no salvation. So the impatient man becomes his own tormenter, and perplexes himself by needless discontents and uneasiness; he becomes insupportable to himself, robs his own soul of peace and quietness, and introduceth passion, under which ill habit of mind we should not presume to reply, or undertake any thing of consequence; because it clouds and renders the understanding incapable of acting for our good.

In such cases let the smoke fly off, the troubled water settle, and you will discover what reason requires. When you find anger boil, retire, change the discourse, or impose upon yourself an obstinate silence; and let whatsoever persecute you, you must confess at the last that some resent the least thing that has been done against them, and that they make forgiveness a difficult work; whereas it is both our duty and interest. All trifles ought to be despised; for if we dwell upon them, our imagination will increase them; and the more we think upon them, they will appear the more intolerable. Patience is the only means to disarm this enemy; besides, it pleases and honours God, and keeps us in a posture to receive a deliverance from our troubles, or the accomplishment of our hopes.

How to overcome impatience.

VI. The other duty above-mentioned is SELF-DENIAL, or a willingness to quit all earthly comforts, even life itself, and to undergo the greatest hardships, though they end in death, rather than out of a fondness to this world to do any thing contrary to the religion of Jesus-Christ; that faith, which was once delivered to the saints. Because this is the only method to secure the blessings of eternal glory; for if we deny him before men, he will deny us before his father, who is in heaven: chusing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: which scripture in a larger sense comprehends the denying our innocent appetites, whenever they prove to be the

the means to hinder our practice of the greater acts of mortification. For

Of innocent appetites.

The denial of our innocent appetites is instrumental in mortifying our sinful desires, and disobedient actions; because if we gratify them in all things, where we lawfully may, they will by long use and indulgence acquire a great power over us, and then it may be a difficult task to deny them any thing: for, our appetites make no difference between an innocent and sinful enjoyment, they are only moved by pleasure; so that if we will be sure to conquer and subdue them in all instances that are sinful, we must take care they grow not strong upon us in any particulars. And therefore it is represented in scripture, by forsaking father and mother, by hating wife and children, by denying brother and sister, by quitting all that we have, by laying down our lives, and bearing the cross of Christ. And

Of great advantage.

We are engaged by many and great *advantages* to practise this christian virtue; for, God hath promised to assist and support us by his Holy Spirit in the discharge of this difficult duty; he hath been graciously pleased to assure us, that he will reward the practice of it with greater degrees of eternal happiness; and nothing can be more reasonable, than to part with things of small value, for things infinitely greater. Moreover, the blessed Jesus, who requires it from us, hath given us the greatest example of self-denial that ever was, and that in pity and kindness to us, and wholly for our benefit and advantage; that when we have paid the tribute of nature here, he may receive us through the gate of death into the mansions of eternal bliss hereafter.

Zeal.

VII. Having laid before you the respective duties towards GOD, *our neighbour*, and *our selves*, together with their opposite sins, and the means to practise the one, and to avoid the other; I shall now exhort you to be *zealous* in the faith, and to be continually labouring to enrich your souls with virtue, and as much as in you lies to root out all vice, not only from your own hearts, but where ever it is in your power, either by example or authority. This is our duty: yet like all other christian virtues it being often misused, I shall endeavour to describe what that zeal is, so necessary to all men.

Zeal is an earnest concern for or against something, and a close pursuit of it; and is in it's own nature indifferent, like the rest of

Good.

the passions, but *good* or *bad*, according to the object and degree thereof. It is used in the holy scriptures in a *good* sense, when applied to those things where the

Bad.

honour of God and the salvation of men's souls are concerned; but in a *bad* sense, when applied to a furious spirit of persecution, and to such contentions and divisions as produce wrath and envy: so *christian zeal* is right in

in respect of it's object, if what we contend for be certainly and considerably good, and what we oppose be certainly and considerably evil; if the measure and degree of it be proportioned to the good or evil of things, for which it is concerned; if it be pursued and prosecuted by lawful and warrantable means; since no zeal for God and his glory, or for his true religion, will justify the doing of that which in itself is evil or unjust.

*Christian
zeal.*

Zeal becomes *evil* when we violently contend *When abused.* for any doctrine that is erroneous, and are more earnestly concerned for the externals of religion, than for solid and real goodness, which they are designed to work in us; when it betrays us to the breach of any of God's laws, in order to promote his glory; and creates divisions and schisms in the christian church; as also when we prosecute even truth itself, without that meekness and charity, which are a part of the character of a good christian. And we have the more reason to take care how we govern our zeal, because that Moses himself, distinguished for his meekness, when zealous for God, at the waters of Meribah, was so provoked, that he spake unadvisedly with his lips; so that if our zeal for God be not well tempered, we may, with that great prophet, break the tables of the law, and throw them out of our hands, with zeal for their preservation.

Our zeal should be shewn not by fire and fagot and excommunications threatened against *How to be
practised.* those we suppose to pervert or mistake the word of God; but by earnest prayer to God for their conversion, that he would bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived: by shewing such kindness to their persons as may dispose them to receive the impressions of those arguments, that we should offer with meekness for their amendment: by abstaining from all reproachful and bitter reflections, which prejudice them against the truth: by exercising all acts of charity towards them, which is the only moderation due to those that differ from us in religious matters, without yielding any necessary point of faith, by too much complaisance; for tho' we should behave to them as brethren in kindness and gentleness, yet we must not imitate their ways, but be followers of the Lord, and oppose firmness in the faith to their errors. Yet when they lie under the censures of the church, we should keep at a distance from their conversation; which is but reasonable, that when all methods have been used for their recovery, we may be careful to avoid any infection. Yet rigorous corporal punishments, and infliction of death upon these accounts, appear contrary to the spirit of the christian religion, and inconsistent with many of the chief principles thereof; seeing that the gospel of our Saviour engages us to shew meekness to all men, and universal love and good will even to our enemies. From whence it must follow, that no difference

rence of religion, nor any pretence of zeal for God, can justify a spirit full of rage, malice and vengeance.

SUNDAY XVII.

I. *Of death, being common, but uncertain as to time, and advantageous to all men.* **II.** *How we should number our days, and of repentance and habitual preparation for death.* **III.** *Of the hinderances of a good preparation, with advice for the disposal of our worldly affairs, a disregard of the world, patience in sickness, submission to God's will, and of the advice and assistance of a minister.* **IV.** *In what the death of the righteous and the length of man's life consist, including the advantages of piety, and the disadvantages of a long life.* **V.** *Of the means to improve our lives, and of a middle state.* **VI.** *The several reasons why death is terrible both to the natural and to the spiritual man; and why many desire to live long in this world.* **VII.** *Of the height of christian perfection, and the danger of delaying our turning to God.*

The intention of this book.

I. **N**OW all these instructions, by which I have endeavoured to enforce the *Whole Duty of Man*, which, as you have been taught under their particular heads, consists in a sincere and lively faith in God the Father through Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, and a perfect obedience to his commands, revealed to mankind in the gospel, are intended as so many guides through the rugged paths of this troublesome and sinful world to the confines of eternal glory; and as so many timely supports against the anxiety, sorrow and temptations, which attend mankind, when death calls us from the stage of this life. So now observe that

Death, what it is.

DEATH is no more than a separation of the soul and body; the soul returns into the hands of God its creator, and the body to dust, of which it was made: not that by dying we cease to live; for the soul is of

Is common and near unto all men.

an immortal nature, and our bodies shall be raised incorruptible. This death is entailed on all by our first parents, for in Adam we all die; it is a sure debt we must all pay to nature in our corrupt state; and the daily examples of mortality are constant proofs that death is not far from every one of us: for, as the Psalmist observes, the days of our age are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength then but labour and sorrow; so soon passeth it away, and we are gone. This is the *ordinary* period of human life, when it is spun out to the greatest length: and therefore within this term we may with reason expect to die. Yet

Is uncertain.

How much of this time we shall run out, how soon or late we shall die, we know not; for we see no age exempted from death: we see some expire in the cradle

dle and at their nurses breast ; others in the heat and vigour of youth ; and others outliving their families to a decrepit old age ; and a great many are often surpris'd by death, when they least think thereof : this should convince us, that *But it's time* the time of our death is a secret belonging to God, *not decreed by* and therefore hidden from our sight. Not that God.

God has determin'd how long every man shall live, by any absolute decree, that is restrained by no condition ; yet, if a sparrow does not fall to the ground without our Father, much less shall man die without his appointment or permission : a special providence appears as well in the death as in the birth of every one that is born of a woman. So we are taught, that no man can destroy himself but by God's leave ; nor can any disease kill, but when God pleases ; neither can any mortal accident befall us, without God's appointment. The plague, the pestilence, the famine and the sword, fulfil the will of the Lord, and, by his particular commission, execute his vengeance upon the obstinate and the wicked doer : and on the contrary, the most savage rage and fury of man cannot, without God's particular permission, take away our lives.

This lays us under a perpetual obligation to *How ad-* serve God, and to please him in all our ways : this *tageous to men.* secures us from all danger, and the fears thereof ; and this is an assurance of our hope, that God will hear our petitions when we pray for the deliverance of ourselves or our friends from danger, troubles, sickness or temptation. This should make us as willing to part with this vail of flesh, as to seek for a remedy to remove the film from the eyes of our body. Was death more intolerable than the afflictions, which daily pursue human nature, were the comforts and pleasures of this life more desirable and happy in their consequences than what God has reserved for his servants, and his children by adoption in Christ Jesus ; both the rich and poor, both the easy and heavy laden, might pray for a longer continuance upon earth : But through death and the grave we must pass, before we can enjoy perfect happiness.

Thus GOD's *wisdom and goodness* is wonderfully displayed in reserving to himself the *num-* *A token of* *God's wisdom* *and goodness.* *ber of our days* ; for such a knowledge in man could be no means of making his present state more conformable to the gospel of Christ ; where the heart is so hardened against those means of salvation, which God has appointed, when it is not sure of living a moment longer : and should God vouchsafe to reveal to any one, that his life is confin'd within the narrow bounds of one short night, or limited to the end of fifteen years, it would chill the blood and sink the spirits of the strongest man, and the pleasures and comforts of his remaining life would be overcast, as if one under sentence of death without hopes of a reprieve. And,

In regard to young men.

Should *young men*, who are cut off in the midst of their hopes to live a long life, know the certain time of their death, they being certain that twenty or thirty years were to be the days of their whole life, they would never trouble themselves in the pursuit of trades and learning, nor concern themselves with this world any more, than just to live so long therein. This would be a certain means to thin the nurseries of arts and sciences: none would toil and labour, did they know that the immediate product thereof would so soon be taken from them by death, and given to another: nor is it reasonable to think, that any parent would be at so great expence as attends a child's instruction in the languages, arts and sciences, if he knew that he must die as soon as he had attained knowledge in them. In a word, such a knowledge of the certain time of our death would be an insupportable mischief to all communities, and destroy half of the world, by destroying the industry and improvement of half mankind. But,

An objection.

The searchers for unrevealed knowledge urge that these inconveniencies to society are superseded by the great advantages which may follow from a certain knowledge of the precise time of our death; as namely, say they, it would prompt many young men to spend their days in piety and devotion, and to make the next world their care, and thereby secure the salvation of many thousands, who are now eternally ruined (not by a want of this knowledge, but) by youthful lusts and vanities. But,

Answered.

Is not this arguing like the rich man in the gospel, who being in torment, begged that Abraham would send Lazarus from the dead, to persuade his brethren to repentance? And should not they therefore receive Abraham's answer? They who live in this world are taught by God's holy word, that their time is short in this world, that man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and when death brings them before the judgment-seat of Christ, that they shall be judged according to their behaviour towards God and man in this world; so that they who have done good, shall go into life eternal, and they that have done evil, into eternal fire; and consequently, if they did know the certain time of their death, they would live and die as bad as they do now in this state of uncertainty; for if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Wherefore although

Both in regard to youth,

It cannot be denied, but that the heat and extravagancies of *youth* might be sooner corrected, and heaven and hell more exactly represented by this means; yet God does not think fit to do either; because it offers too much force and violence to the freedom of man's will. It should be considered, that our abode upon earth is a state of probation;

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probation ; we are created to live virtuous lives ; to reverence our God ; and to conquer the world, the flesh and the devil, by the power of faith : and therefore as God hath set before us both good and evil, and will enable us to chuse the good, he will not force any man ; he has given the gospel for our trial and discipline ; and if the certain hopes and fears of another world, and the uncertainty of our living here, revealed by his word, will not conquer these flattering temptations, and make men seriously religious, as those who must certainly die, and go into another world, and they know not how soon, God will not, and is not in justice bound to try whether the certain knowledge of their death will make them wise unto salvation. It is a sufficient reason for young men to expect death, and to prepare for it in the days of their youth, when they are convinced by thousands of examples that they may die young : therefore if they will venture, and eternally miscarry by their wilful delays, they must take their chance, and not say, they had no warning of dying young. The merciful God will accept of repenting prodigals ; he wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live ; yet he cannot in justice encourage us in sin, by giving us notice of the hour of our death, which would only serve to put off our repentance, till death stares us in the face, which is the worst time for so weighty and important a work. And

As there is found no reason in favour of youth, *And old-age.* neither can there be any assigned, why this knowledge should be granted to *old-age* : on the contrary, we may now observe, while life and death is in this state of uncertainty, that the very flattering ourselves with the hopes of a long life, is apt to make us too desirous of a continuance thereof : this is often found to weaken the hopes and fears of the next world, by removing it at too great a distance from us ; and to encourage men to live in sin, while they imagine that they have time enough before them to indulge their appetites, to repent of their offences, and to make their peace with God before they die ; and if the uncertain hopes of this undoes so many, what can be expected from the certain knowledge thereof ? It may be feared, that even they who are too wise to be imposed on by such uncertain hopes, might be conquered by the certain knowledge of the distant time of their death. For, such a fore-knowledge would take off all restraints from men ; who, how wicked soever they might be, knowing that they could never be surpris'd by death, would naturally give a scope to their vicious inclinations : and besides, it would destroy one great motive to obedience, as it is written, The fear of the lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened ; or, the wicked shall not live out half their days. Which, and the like promises and threatnings, must be struck out of the Bible, should it be revealed to every particular

man how long he has to live. And whereas now publick calamities, plague and famine, and the sword, alarm a wicked world, summon men to repentance, and reclaim sinners; and sometimes a dangerous or painful fit of illness awakens men to an abhorrence of their former wickednesses, and settles in their hearts a true, sincere and continuing repentance; those means by which the goodness of God exhorts us to turn unto him, would all prove insufficient, did men know the certain end of their life, and that they should not die under any of those publick judgments, or be bowed down to the grave by their present distempers. Therefore,

*Our duty to
God on this
account.*

Let us thank the Almighty, that he has hidden the hour of our death from our mortal eyes, and so improve the uncertainty of our lives, as God did intend we should, in a constant watchfulness against sin, and in an early and persevering course of virtue; that, when we shall depart out of this world, we may be judged worthy of life everlasting. And let us confess without wavering, that to know when we shall die, would serve no good end, but would only tend to increase the too luxuriant wickedness of mankind; which is a sufficient vindication of the wisdom of God, who has reserved the knowledge of that particular time, when man shall be called from time to eternity, unto himself.

Seeing then we are certain, that we cannot live *What influence* above threescore or fourscore years, or some few *it should have.* years over or under, we should not extend our hopes, expectations and designs beyond this time, which God has fixed for the conclusion of our abode upon earth. And, as we ought not to live as if we were immortal creatures, who never die; so it is unreasonable for us to trouble ourselves about this world, longer than we are like to continue therein. Did men only consider how long they may or can live, and set bounds to their necessary provisions here upon earth, they might see some end of their labour, cares and riches, and of adding house to house, and field to field; whereas, in the present practice of covetous nature, mankind drudge on to the last moment they have to live, heaping up riches, without knowing who shall gather them; or as if their lives, and their enjoyments of them, were also never to have an end. I allow that a competent provision for children is a just reason to continue our industry, though we have enough for the natural course of our own lives; but to labour to leave them rich and great, is rather an excuse than a reason; because great riches are too often the child's misfortune, who, not being trained up in the paths of righteousness, has been too much pampered in the ways of the world: whereas it is the piety of our parents, which entails a blessing on their posterity; and an industrious and virtuous education is a better inheritance for children than a great fortune. Nay, it is observed, that men, who

who are so intent, to the very last stage of their life, to increase their estates, seldom do it for any other reason, but to gratify their own insatiable thirst, which is to hoard up riches for a time when they cannot enjoy them, and to provide for their own living in this world a much longer time than they know they can possibly live therein.

II. As God has vouchsafed to reveal to us the common end of human life, we should so *number our days*, as to apply our hearts unto wisdom, to observe the continual waste of our lives, and how they daily draw to an end. Before we can attain that happiness which Christ has purchased for us, we must fit and prepare ourselves for a holy and happy death; in which we ought to use the greatest care and caution; because a mistake in this matter is never to be recalled. Man can die but once; and death will certainly translate us to endless joys, or consign us to everlasting torments: so that nothing can be wiser than to take such measures as may prevent this, and secure that.

How to number our days.

The *best preparation for death* is the constant exercising of piety and virtue in the whole course of our lives: this is the only armour that is proof against the attacks of that dreadful enemy to nature. So that men strangely delude themselves, who depend upon any other method than that of keeping a conscience void of offence, towards God and towards man. Therefore whosoever would make death safe and happy, must reconcile himself to God by a sincere and hearty repentance, and a true faith in Jesus Christ; which we should immediately apply ourselves unto, lest sickness and death should overtake us before we have accomplished so necessary a work. For,

What is the best preparation for death.

Though a *death-bed* may be a proper season to renew our repentance, and to trim our lamp; yet it is the most unfit time to begin it; and it then very rarely, if ever, takes effect: * for we can never have any security that a *late repentance* is hearty and sincere. A man may very well, at the amazing approach of death and judgment, be extremely sorry that he has lived wickedly; he may strongly wish that he had lived the life of the righteous; and resolve, if he were to live over again, that he would do so; and yet all this may be merely the passion, and not at all the duty, of repentance; which is an entire change of mind, and an effectual reformation of life: but the passion of sorrow and remorse is such as accursed spirits shall be for ever tormented with in vain; and such as a dying penitent can never be secure that his late repentance will exceed. But,

Of repentance.

Supposing a late repentance to be hearty and sincere; yet we have no positive and absolute pro-

Which must not be delayed.

* See the christian duty of *repentance*, page 132.

mise, that it shall be accepted. The plain and express condition of the covenant established by Christ is a holy life ; that is, a constant and persevering obedience to all the commands of God, from the time of our baptism, or of our coming to the knowledge of the truth, until the end of our lives. And the least that can possibly lay claim to the reward promised upon this condition, is such a repentance as produces the actual obedience of at least some proportionable part of a man's life. Therefore to say that the original condition of the christian covenant is such, that a man may safely live wickedly all his life, and satisfy all his lusts and appetites to the utmost, provided he does but leave off and forsake his sins at the last, is really to take away the necessity of a holy life, and to undermine the very foundation of all virtue. Consequently, though God may possibly have reserves of mercy, which in event he may exercise towards men in their last extremity ; yet originally it is certain the gospel covenant gives no assurance of comfort, but either to a constant and persevering holiness, or to a repentance evidenced by actually renewed obedience.

*A caution to
sinners.*

Let those men consider these things, who resolve now to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and hope hereafter by a late repentance to get a share also in the eternal rewards of virtue : let them consider that they may be cut off in the midst of their hopes ; or that they may be as unwilling to repent hereafter, as they are at present : but above all, let them consider, that though they should live to that time, when they shall be willing to leave their sins, because the strength of their temptations will cease ; yet they cannot be sure that God will then accept them. The express condition of the gospel is, that we seek first the kingdom of God, that we deny ourselves, and that we overcome the world ; and the threatnings which the scripture denounceth against those, who refuse to hear the voice of God when he calleth, and to seek him whilst he may be found, are terrible to impenitent sinners : for, he will by no means clear the guilty, nor can by any application be reconciled to sin. No bribe, no force, no artifice, no intercession, no length of time, can change his hatred towards unrighteous actions ; or hinder him, without true repentance, and effectual amendment, from punishing unrighteous men. His wisdom, his honour, his goodness, obliges him to preserve the dignity of his laws and government ; and it is therefore a dreadful thing for wilful sinners to fall into the hands of the ever-living ever-unchangeable God. Let those therefore who have yet the time before them, consider what they have to do : let them be careful to hearken unto the voice of God to day, whilst it is called to day : let them be zealous to improve that time and those talents wherewith God hath blessed them, that when their master cometh,

meth, he may find them so doing, and bid them, as having been good and faithful servants, to enter into the joy of their Lord : I say, let us consider these things ; and while we rightly maintain, that true repentance cannot at any time be in vain or ineffectual to procure pardon, let us be careful not to entertain any such notions of repentance, as will take away the necessity of a holy life, and of that persevering obedience, which is the express and indispensable condition of the gospel covenant. And

Even they who are ready to welcome death by *Of habitual an habitual preparation*, and have governed *preparation*. their lives under the conduct and influence of the thoughts of dying long before, must not rest, in the decline of days, in too great a security ; they have not yet perfected the great work of salvation, which we are all sent into the world to finish under Jesus Christ, the great author thereof. They must therefore remember, that there must be a *solemn preparation* for it, or a thorough review of their lives and actions ; they must make their peace with God and their own consciences, by examining whether there be any sin which they have not sincerely repented of, and heartily begged God's pardon for ; whether they have made restitution and reparation, as far as in their power, for injuries done to their neighbour ; whether they are in love and christian charity with all men ; whether they have formerly been too negligent of their duty of charity to the poor, education of their own children, support of their families, and such like duties required in their proper station of life : and from henceforth they must apply themselves to a more diligent discharge thereof, by rectifying the distempers of their minds, mortifying disorderly passions, and improving that grace which God giveth bountifully to all men. And they who thus prepare themselves for death, will have great hope and assurance in their latter end. Therefore,

Let us not reckon upon living threescore years *In all times of* and ten, or fourscore years, when very likely *our life*. thirty or forty, the best half of our lives, are already past away. Would men but seriously think upon this, they would not be so apt to flatter themselves with a long life : for no man accounts twenty or thirty years a long life ; yet that is the most they, who are come to the decline of age, have to live, though they should be prolonged to the longest term of a common duration : much less could they flatter themselves with a long life, when probably ten or fifteen years must balance the account with nature. What shall we say then of those men, who draw near the end of their reckoning ; or perchance, who have already spun out the common thread of human life ? These should, as the world expresses it, be doubly diligent in their preparation for the approaching dissolution of their body and soul ; which, how vigo-

rous soever their constitution may appear, cannot be at a great distance. These, who have already attained to the common measure of a human life, and are already in the borders and confines, or rather in the very quarters of death, are unpardonable, if they are deceived with the hopes of living much longer.

It's advantages.

By a thorough knowledge of the state of our own souls, we shall enjoy peace and satisfaction of mind; and not only deliver our consciences from guilty fears, but even disarm death of it's stings and terrors, by reforming whatever was amiss; for the sting of death is sin, and when this sting is pulled out, we have nothing else to contend with, but some little aversions to dying, which are more easily overcome, by the joyful prospect of eternal glory, which waits on the brink of eternity to receive those that die in the Lord: especially if we consider what a joyful place it is, where we shall be delivered from all the fears and sorrows, and temptations of this world; where we shall see God and the blessed Jesus face to face, and converse with angels and glorified spirits, without fear of dying any more; where there is nothing but perfect love, joy, rest and peace; no cross interests and factions to contend with; no storms to ruffle and disturb our joy and rest for ever; where there is no pain, no sickness nor labour; no care to refresh the weariness, or to repair the decays of a mortal body, nor so much as the image of death to interrupt our pleasures for evermore. Then we shall serve God, not after the manner of men, with dull and sleepy and unaffecting devotions, but with piercing thoughts, ravishment and transport, life and vigour. Whereas,

The hindrances of a good preparation for death.

III. Such men as converse much in this world, and are distracted with the cares and business of it; if they live in a hurry, so as, when they have discharged one obligation, they are pressed hard with another, that in the morning they have no time to beg God's blessing, nor hardly spirits left to say their prayers at night, and the Lord's day itself is thought more proper for rest and refreshment for their bodies and feeble spirits, than, as it ought to be, for devotion towards God, who has sanctified it to his own name, and for his peculiar service; such men, I say, can have but very dull apprehensions of another life: because it is well known, that after all the care we can take, this world will insinuate itself into our affections, when our whole business is buying and selling, and driving good bargains: for, such a hurry as this, disorders our passions, occasions feuds and quarrels, and gives us such a tincture of covetousness, ambition and pride, that there is work enough after a busy life to root out the love of this world, and settle our whole desire on a future happy state. And,

A just disposal of our worldly affairs.

We must also set our house in order, by a prudent and pious disposition of our worldly affairs, which requires time and consideration to do it well;

well; and therefore cannot so well be dispatched in our last moments, when our minds are disordered, our bodies oppressed with pain and sickness, and when we run the hazard of being imposed upon by those, who out of interest diligently attend us on those occasions. Perhaps we may in some measure be free from those inconveniencies; yet the little time we shall then have to live, is too precious to be consumed about the vanities we are going to leave. Wherefore except we make our wills in the days of our health, that matter possibly may never be performed, or after such an imperfect manner as to convey strife and contention to our posterity; and at best, when we are least able to bear it, to give great trouble and disorder to ourselves; so that such a will is too often rather the will of those about us than our own intentions. We ought to have both thought and consideration to dispose of our estates in a christian manner; to give children their fitting portions; to acknowledge the kindness of our friends; to reward the services of our dependants, and to make distributions for the poor and needy; and all this in so clear a manner, that no differences or law-suits may thence arise among those we leave in the world. For which purpose the church hath wisely directed the minister, when he attends the sick person, if he hath not disposed of his goods, to admonish him to make his will, and to declare his debts, what he owes, and what is owing to him, for the better discharging of his conscience, and the quietness of his executors; withal acknowledging, that men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling their temporal estates whilst they are in health both in body and mind.

It is farther necessary to make us die with comfort and satisfaction, that we wean our affections from the things of this world; for our concern to *Disregard of the world.* part with them will always bear a proportion to the love and esteem wherewith we have enjoyed them; and to be separated from objects upon which we have fixed our hearts, must be attended with great uneasiness and regret. Therefore we should accustom ourselves to resign freely to God, what death will snatch from us by force; and gently to untie those knots, which fasten us to the world, that we may have less pain when they are to be entirely dissolved. Which practice consists in being less concerned for the things of the body, and all bodily pleasures; to expect, with submission to the will of God, the success of our temporal affairs; to suppress all ambitious and covetous desires; to retrench sometimes the use of lawful pleasures; * to abound in works of charity; to be most ready to part with what we love most, when God thinks fit; and to bear all losses and afflictions without murmuring and repining; so that we may be able to say, we die daily; not only because the time of our death is every moment approaching, but

* See *temperance in recreations*, page 287.

but also because we find daily less fondness for life, less earnestness for trifles, less desire of applause, less eagerness for profit, and less concern for whatever is most esteemed by the world. And as the days of our pilgrimage here upon earth must draw to an end, which were given us to glorify God both in our souls and bodies, to do good unto all men, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; we should use great care about the spending our short time in improper visits, or in vain diversions, or in sloth, as if mirth and doing nothing were the business of our mortal state. Let us now therefore, if we are settled in a calling, manage it with justice and diligence, always remembering we have a christian calling of greater importance. If we are not engaged in the world, let us chuse such circumstances as we shall most approve of in a dying hour: if we have great estates, and the advantages of power and understanding, let us look upon ourselves as under the greater obligations to spend our time well; because in such circumstances there is greater capacity and leisure to attend the good of others, as well as our own salvation. But,

Patience in sickness.

Our immediate preparation for death consists in bearing our sickness, that precedes it, with a true christian frame and temper of mind, with great patience under our sufferings, and resignation of mind to the will of God; with a firm trust and dependence upon his infinite wisdom and goodness, and with thankful acknowledgments of those mercies with which he allays the sorrows of our distemper, and lightens the burthen under which we labour; carefully restraining all murmurings against God, or any discontent, by reason thereof; watching against all the temptations to anger, such as the mistakes and inadvertencies of those about us, the unseasonable kindness of our friends, the disagreeableness of our medicines, and such like; curbing anxious fears of worse than may come to pass. And, being content to wait God's time for our deliverance, we

Submission to God's will.

must quiet our minds under the apprehensions of future evils, by considering that we are in the hands of a good God, who will lay no more upon us than we are able to bear; and who will in his due time either remove what afflicts us, or give us strength to endure it in such a manner, that it may contribute to the improvement of our virtue here, and the increase of our happiness hereafter. So that however destitute we leave our nearest relations, as wife and children; yet we must consider, that they are under the protection of providence, whose blessing is the richest portion, and without which the best human prudence is no safeguard. We must rest fully assured, that what God chuses for us is much better than what we could wish for ourselves, were we left to our own choice; we must embrace our sickness and our pains, as chastisements of our past follies, and as proper methods for our growth in grace and the love of God, and be

contented to refer the continuance and event of our sickness to God's good pleasure, because his infinite wisdom knows the best season for our deliverance; and as he first put us into this world, so he is fittest to judge when we should go out thereof.

Neither must we forget to desire the assistance of a spiritual guide, to offer up our prayers, and to support our weakness with the blessed sacrament; spiritualizing all the accidents of our sickness, making them a ground of pious and devout thoughts, which may be sent up in frequent ejaculations to God, who alone can be our comfort under all our distress; imploring his blessing upon all the means we use for our recovery; and offering to him all the pains we endure, as what we are more willing to suffer, than to offend him by. For,

IV. The happiness of the death of the righteous does not consist in any freedom from painful and noisome diseases; nor in any exemption from sudden and unseen accidents and dangers, which often bring the righteous as well as the wicked to their graves; as we learn, not only by experience, but in the case of Lazarus, for whom was prepared a retreat in Abraham's bosom, yet had his body full of sores, and ended his life in a miserable and forlorn condition; while the rich man, whose luxury had kindled for him inextinguishable flames, only grows sick and dies. I say then, this happiness of the good man's death doth not consist in freedom from pain and noisome diseases, but it is distinguished by the temper and disposition of his mind, and is founded on a well-grounded hope and comfortable expectation of a blessed immortality, through the merits of Christ's death, promised to a sincere, though imperfect, obedience to his law. Such a temper makes him contented to quit that body, which he hath always mortified, and to leave this world as a strange land, where he hath been detained a prisoner. And such a desire to be expert in all the devout acts of a pious soul, upon the approach of death, will set apart some time in their retirements to fit and prepare themselves for death, by a solemn exercise of all such virtues, as christians shall then stand most in need of; that they may not be at a loss to perform them, when they become weak and languishing. And, if I may be allowed to hint at such a time, I think the evenings of such sundays and holidays whereon we receive the blessed sacrament, may properly be dedicated to so good and necessary a work: by which, when we really come into the confines of death, our minds may be stored with devout thoughts, and may readily express themselves in those pious acts, which we frequently exercised upon such a prospect of our certain dissolution, or departure from this world.

Advice and assistance of a minister.

In what consists the death of the righteous.

The properest time for this preparation.

Thus

*Of the short-
ness of the life
of man.*

Thus having seen that the life of man is fixed and determined by God, and that this term of life is but very *short* at the utmost extent thereof; threescore and ten or fourscore years soon pass away, and, when they are gone, they're like a dream or a tale that is told, few and empty; let them, who have lived thirty or forty years, confess how little they remember in what manner they are past, and that the remainder of their life is drawing to an end, while they eat, drink and sleep. As therefore our life is so very short, we ought to live as much as we can in so short a space, not measuring the length or shortness of our lives by days, months or years, or the whole time of our continuance in the body, but by such actions as distinguish a man from all other things which God created; and by exercising the understanding and will upon such objects as answer the dignity and perfection of a

*In what the
life of man
consists.*

reasonable creature: consequently, he that eats and drinks, and performs the other offices of a natural life, which are common to him with beasts, lives only like a beast: because a man's actions are to be governed by reason, religion and virtue. Therefore he, who improves his knowledge and understanding most; who subdues his appetites and passions best; who does most good, and makes himself most useful to the world, though he does not continue longer, yet he lives more and longer than other men, for as much as he is instructed and fully persuaded, that the life, which he enjoys here, is only in order to a better life, and exerts more frequent and more perfect acts of a rational and christian life. Wherefore St. James declares, Ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Consequently,

*Who live the
longest in this
world.*

Such an one has lived a great while, how short soever the time be, who is old in virtue, and ripe for heaven and eternal bliss; who has laid up riches and glorious treasures for himself in a future state; who has answered the ends of his life by acts of piety and virtue, by improvements in knowledge and grace, and the love of God and of his Son Christ Jesus our Lord. Hence

*The advan-
tage of piety.*

Let us observe that the shortness of our lives is a sufficient answer to all those objections against providence, taken from the prosperity of bad men, and the miseries and afflictions of the good; for both of 'em are so short, that they are nothing compared to eternal pains and glory. As for the prosperity of wicked men, it can last but a little while; therefore says the inspired Psalmist, I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green Bay-tree; yet he passed away, and lo he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. And as for the afflictions of the godly, the apostle declareth, that his light affliction, which

dureth but for a moment, worketh for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Besides, a long life is not reconcilable with the present state of the universe; because the world at present is very unequally divided: some have nothing but what they can earn by very hard labour, or extort from other men's charity by continual importunity, or more ungodly means: wherefore, notwithstanding the rich and prosperous, who have this world's goods, and live in ease and plenty, pleasure and abundance, would be well contented to continue some hundreds of years in this life; yet I cannot think, that any body would desire to suffer three-score years, more or less, in slavery, beggary, hunger, want, imprisonment, or such like distresses. Consequently a great part of mankind ought to be very thankful to God for the shortness of life, which delivers them out of so much evil. Again, our lives are long enough for all the wise purposes of living; and we come into this world not barely to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the delights of flesh and sense, which are only means to preserve life, and which God hath sweetened with such proper satisfactions, or made the neglect of them so uneasy and painful, that no man might forget to take care to preserve himself; but we are born to conquer the wicked world, to triumph over it, to baffle it's temptations, to despise it's flatteries, and to endure it's terrors and vexations; and if we live long enough to perform this work, we ought to resign our breath with content, and thank God that he does so soon put an end to our labour, sorrow and temptations.

The disadvantage of a long life.

V. By this it is plain, that we cannot live as we ought to do without *knowledge* and *virtue*; which, some may presume to say, are not to be so well attained in a short time, as in a long course of years. It is true, were the knowledge, which is necessary to improve a christian mind, the dark and intricate study of human learning, the age of Methuselah could not attain to all it's parts and deep recesses: but the knowledge necessary for a christian, or to carry men to heaven, is imbibed with our first instructions in the christian faith; for, as we read in the holy gospel, This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. So that our necessary knowledge in order to save our souls, is not a dissolution of the difficulties of nature and providence, or concerning the secret things of God; but it is confined within the narrow bounds of divine revelation, or faith in God through his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. But, in regard to virtue, it may be urged, that the longer a man lives, the more good he will do, and make himself more useful to his fellow-creatures. This may be granted; yet it does not follow, that such a virtuous man ought to live longer upon earth than the common age of human kind; because though he was born

What is necessary to improve our lives.

for this end, to do good unto all men; yet it was in order to his own eternal welfare: and consequently, when by virtue he is fully prepared for heaven, it would be unjust to deprive him of the happy prize, having run his race and conquered: besides, this is God's care, who discharges him from doing any more good in this world, whenever he calls him to eternal rest. And as for the attainment of virtue, there is no need of long time; for it is proposed to us in the most plain and easy precepts, the most admirable examples, the most encouraging and inviting promises, and with the most powerful assurances of the Divine Spirit to aid, renew, and sanctify us: so that whosoever is not reformed by these divine methods of grace in the compass of forty or fifty years, is not likely to be the better for them at the end of so many generations.

No time must be lost in the pursuit of virtue.

Therefore a divine soul, which aspires after immortality, should lose no time to raise itself above the body, to conquer this present world by the belief and hope of things unseen, to awaken and exercise its spiritual powers and faculties, and to adorn itself with those graces and virtues, which come down from the Father of lights, and which by the mercies of God, and the merits of our Saviour, will carry us to heaven; especially when he is threatened with endless misery for the neglect of his salvation. So, how hard soever the libertine may think it to be eternally damned for the short pleasures of sin, no man can reasonably think it a hard condition of eternal salvation, to spend a short life in the service of God their Maker; which service can no where be performed but upon earth: For, if God may justly require our services and obedience for so great a reward as a crown of eternal glory; if nature, in its corrupt state, must be born again, and cleansed from all filth of sin; if this body must be refined and spiritualized, before it can be glorified: Where must this work be perfected, if not upon earth? For, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Of a middle state.

We have no information by holy writ of any middle state between living in this body and our of it; and therefore whatever dispositions and habits of the mind are necessary to make us happy, when the soul departs from the body, must be formed while we live in these bodies of flesh; there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; yet that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual. Therefore as it is impossible to pass immediately from the opposite natural state of the earth to the spiritual state of heaven; we must be convinced that the middle state in which we are spiritualized, between heaven and earth, is a life of holiness during the time we inhabit these earthly tabernacles: because such a man living in the world, and

having

having put off his lusts, and fixed his mind on things above, belongs to both worlds; his heart and affections are in heaven; he by faith meditates upon those invisible glories, and feels and relishes the pleasures of an heavenly state, while he is yet united to this world by his body, which is made of earth, and feels the natural impressions of sensible objects. So, whoever has his conversation in heaven, while he lives upon earth, is ready prepared and fitted to ascend with the Bridegroom, when death shall knock at the door; passing from thence, as it were, through a middle region, or a state of a holy and divine life, into a perfect state of eternal happiness.

Since then death puts an end to our days, in which we are to serve God, and prepare for eternity, and determines our future state for ever; and knowing that this death comes but once, it is of infinite consequence, that when death comes, we may be well prepared for his summons into eternity. And, who is the person that would not take the utmost caution in doing that, which can be done only once for his whole life, especially if the happiness of the whole life depends thereon? No error can be corrected in what is to be done but once; and shall that person hope for pardon, who permits death to surprise him; who falls into the grave without thought of futurity? Or, what is worse, not only neglects, but, it may be, makes a jest of sin, and defies God and his judgments? A wise man will use great caution in making an experiment, that can never be tried a second time, and which, if it fail, must absolutely cost him his life: which is the very case of all men, in regard of death: we can die but once, and, if we miscarry that once, we are undone for ever; yet this is the dangerous experiment made every day by sinners, who stake their souls at random, endeavour to stifle the checks of conscience, put off their repentance in hopes that death is still far off, that sickness and God's holy spirit will call them in time to repent; and, at the best, venture the infinite hazard of a death-bed repentance. Oh! let no one be deceived! that man will be miserable, who is so weak to think that a few distracted, confused, and almost despairing sighs and groans can obtain pardon and forgiveness for a mis-spent life. Alas! if such bold adventurers, as these, could return back into the world, and live their lives over again, after they have discovered their mistake and folly, the hazard would not be so great; but this is impossible. Whoever walks in the paths of unrighteousness till he is hardened in sin, and, having grieved the Spirit, is forsaken of the grace of God; whoever is cut off by death by surprise or without warning, while he continues in sin, must be lost for ever; because he lies without that repentance to salvation, never to be repented of. Is not then that man most foolish, who takes no care, before death comes, to make his calling and election sure?

*The danger
and folly of a
mis-spent life.*

How we are to live in this world, in order for a better life. Remember then that thou must die! and that will furnish thee with a perpetual remedy against the follies and vanities of this wicked world, and promote the growth of christian piety. Whenever a man finds that his desires after this world exceeds their limitations in the gospel, let him remember the fool in the gospel, whose soul was required of him the same night, that he enlarged his desires beyond the wants and conveniencies of life. Let him remember, that he can have no continual abode here, and that death will shortly close his eyes, and the grave will presently swallow him up, and then all his thoughts perish, and his riches cannot follow him. In this decay of nature, it would deserve our consideration, that neither fortune nor honours will avail us in the day of the Lord, any farther than the good use we have made of them in this world; and, unless the rich and honourable are more virtuous than he, they are not better than the poorest man, who begs an alms in the name of the Lord: for with God there is no respect of persons; because they are not the riches, &c. of the body, but the beauties and glories of the spirit, which are pleasing in the sight of God; for it is godliness that is great gain. And if there can be no trust nor hope in riches nor honours, what folly is it for a man to be intoxicated with the love of sensual pleasures, which must all perish with the body? The soul, which desires to live for ever, must not be weakened with ease, and softness, and luxury, which are the plain paths to hell, but must be accustomed to seek after eternal pleasures, which accompany her beyond the grave, and, being stript of flesh and blood, enable her to live for ever. Not that I say, or suppose that men, who must make a necessary provision for the body in this life, can so live always here, as if the next moment were to end their lives; Who then would be saved? but only that our lives should be always as innocent, free from malice, injustice and oppression, as if we were immediately to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that is, we may, and we must always, live as those who must certainly die, and guard all our actions with the thoughts that *they* must all one day be accounted for.

Death, why so dreadful to human nature.

VI. The common and very proper name of death is the *king of terrors*; because it is the most terrible thing to mankind. The natural principle of self-preservation, and the love of life, create in all men a natural aversion to death; for, as the preacher observes, As light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun; so, as all men love life, it's necessary consequence is to fear death; which aversion to death God has imprinted in man, to oblige us to take care of ourselves, and to avoid whatever will destroy or shorten our lives; and this in many particulars is a great principle of virtue, so far as it preserves us from all fatal

and

and destructive vices. Yet, when this natural fear of death is not increased by extraordinary causes, it may be conquered by the force of sound reason. Thus, many examples teach, that the miseries and calamities of this life very often reconcile men to death, and make them earnestly desire it; as in the case of Job, who in the midst of his afflictions said, *How its fear is removed.* My soul chuseth strangling and death rather than life; I loath it, I would not live alway. Whence observe, that if the sense of present suffering can conquer the fears of death, there is no doubt, but the hope of immortal life may do the same in a more eminent degree; for where men are thoroughly convinced, that by death they are to be translated to a more happy state, it would be as easy a thing to put off these bodies as to change their cloaths, or to remove from an old and ruinous house to a more convenient and beautiful dwelling-place. This is the very case of a dying christian, whose fear of death, arising naturally either from the thoughts of ceasing to be, or an unwillingness to change this life for one he knows nothing of, is taken away by the gospel revelation, which discovers to us a new and glorious world, where we, if we now improve our time, may live for ever. Thus a christian, whose life is conformable to the doctrine and example of his Saviour, sees nothing frightful or terrible in death, which, through the infirmity of the flesh, his body naturally startles at, and draws back from, as he meets with it in the way to immortal life: therefore, though we cannot expect wholly to conquer our natural aversion to death, we can always have hope of a blessed immortality, and with St. Paul desire, if not to be unclothed, to be clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. Consequently, the only way to arm ourselves against these natural fears of dying, is to confirm ourselves in this belief, that death does not put an end to us, that our souls shall survive in a state of bliss and happiness, though our bodies shall turn to dust, and that these mortal bodies shall themselves rise again immortal and glorious at the sound of the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. So the man, who believes and expects this, can have no reason to be afraid of death; on the contrary, he has great reason not to fear death, though he tremble a little under the weakness and aversions of nature in it's degenerate state. But,

As sin is the cause of death, so also it is that only, which makes death itself most terrible. It is not barely the separation of soul and body, which is the terror of death to a christian; but that separation, as inflicted by, and accompanied with, the wrath of God. It is sin only, which is the horror of death, and which gives it that sting, which makes it really insupportable even to the most distant thought. *Sin makes our death most terrible.* When the death of the body is the

forerunner of that death of the soul, from which there is no hope of release, but the wrath of God must abide on it for ever; then it is that death appears truly dreadful and terrible. This is that, which makes wicked men, conscious of their own guilt, and sensible of the wrath of God hanging over their heads, so amazed at the approach and even at the thoughts of death: They cannot bear to think of so affrighting a prospect, but are even over-whelmed and swallowed up with astonishment and despair. Yet again,

Whence ariseth

*the desire of
long life.*

If we consider the reason why death is so terrible to most men, we shall find their unwillingness to leave this world, occasioned by that great fondness and passion, which the generality of mankind retain for this present life; in omuch that whatever glorious things they hear of a future state, they being of the earth earthly, only like what they see; and not expecting to better their condition, chuse to stay in this life: so that it is a double death to these, when snatched away from their darling pleasures. In such a case, as it will be in vain to set about to persuade them that the next world is a happier place than this, the best way

It's cure.

will be to endeavour their conversion; by setting before them the terrors of a future state, where the devil, his angels, and the unhappy souls of unrepenting sinners departed this life, are confined to all eternity in lakes of fire and brimstone. Ask that mere worldling, what it shall profit him to gain the whole world, and to lose his own soul, or what he can give in exchange for his soul? In a word, drive such men on to dread and fear the consequences of a mis-spent life, till the fear of death cures their vicious passions and thirst after this world; and then the fear of death will by degrees cure itself of that irksomeness so common in human nature. And consequently they, who intend in good earnest to set about the cure of this fear of death, should mortify all remains of love and affection for this world, and withdraw themselves as much as possible from the conversation thereof, using it sparingly and with indifference, rather to supply the wants, than to enjoy the pleasures, of nature: and then they will find no more difficulty to leave this world for heaven, than a traveller does, when he leaves a foreign country, to return to his native land. Now,

*The height of
christian per-
fection.*

VII. Whoever can thus meet death is arrived to the height and perfection of christian virtue; for this is the true mortification of the flesh, with it's affections and lusts. This is the way to die to this world, and to live unto God; and when we are dead to this world, the fear of dying and leaving it will cease: for, what should a man do in this world, who is dead to it and all things therein? So, when we are alive to God, nothing can be so desireable as to go to him; for here we live only to God by faith and hope,

whereas

whereas the place, where God dwells, is the proper place for this divine life.

Behold then ! I have laid before you the happy *It's comfort to* state of good men at the hour of death ; they *the soul of a* look into eternity without terror, where instead *dying person.* of a court of justice they approach a throne of grace ; instead of a judge, rigorous to mark what is done amiss, they meet with a Father, and a Saviour, who died for us, and has redeemed us at the price of his own blood : such a soul as this casteth away fear, possesses a perfect calm and serenity, and transported with joy and triumph, magnifies the Lord, and rejoices in God it's Saviour, who is ready to pronounce her blessed, and to crown her with glory. This is the death of the righteous ; and God grant that our latter end may be like his, that in the agonies of death, and in the very jaws of the grave, we may not be discomposed with disturbing thoughts, nor distracted with guilty fear ; but that we may depart this life with all the joyful tokens of eternal rest. Therefore says the apostle to the Corinthians, My beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. I shall therefore conclude this apostolick exhortation with my earnest request for

*The danger of
delaying our
turning to God.*

the good of your soul, that you immediately enter upon the practice of what you have read in this book, and are taught to be your duty, and the duty of every christian. Delays are dangerous, and especially in a matter of so great importance, as the care of our souls : and one moment of time may deprive us by unforeseen accidents of those means of grace, which now God has put in our hands : *Make therefore no long tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day. Ecclesiasticus, v. 7.*

The End of the Third PART.

PRIVATE
DEVOTIONS

Containing

Directions and Hymns

FOR

MORNING AND EVENING

WITH

Occasional PRAYERS, suited to various

Circumstances of Life.

To which are added

Prayers proper for sick Persons,

AND

For such as receive the Holy Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper.

The Sixth Edition.

The Lord is rich unto all them that call upon him; and
all such that will call upon him faithfully. — He
also will bear their cry, and will help them. Ps. cxiv.
18, 19. — 1 Th. v. 25.

DUBLIN.

Printed for P. Wilson, at Gay's Head in Dame-street; and
J. Esdaile, at the Corner of Capel-street, on Cork Hill.

M.DCCXCVI.

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Directions and Prayers

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Printed for P. WILSON, at *Gay's Head* in *Dame-street*; and
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M.DCC.XLVI.



To the READER.

HAVING shewn in *Sunday 7*, of the *NEW Whole Duty of Man*, that Prayer is every Man's *Duty*, that the Practice of it is *Advantageous* and *Necessary*, and that the *Objections* usually brought against it are very *unreasonable* and *fallacious*, I rather chuse to refer you to what I have there said, than to trouble you with any further Preface to these Devotions.

 *Note*, When the Prayers for *Morning* or *Evening* are to be used with a *Family*,

Instead of $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{I} \\ \text{me} \\ \text{my} \\ \text{I am} \\ \text{am I} \\ \text{myself} \end{array} \right\}$ say $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{we} \\ \text{us} \\ \text{our} \\ \text{we are} \\ \text{are we} \\ \text{ourselves} \end{array} \right\}$

Those who have not time to use all the prayers, &c. directed to be said every Morning and Evening, may content themselves with the Use of the Prayer for Morning in page 321, and the Prayer for Evening in page 328.

DEVOTIONS

DEVOTIONS

For the USE of

FAMILIES and particular PERSONS.

Directions and Prayers for Morning. Directions.

TH E best preparation for spending the day well, is to resolve when you first awake in the morning, and to strive as earnestly as you can, to keep all worldly thoughts out of your mind, till you have presented the first fruits of the day to God, lifting up, with your first breath, your soul to the Creator and Preserver of all things, in such like pious sentences as these that follow:

AWAKE, O my soul! and sing praises to thy God.
I laid me down and slept, and rose up again: for the Lord sustained me.

Lord raise me up at the last day, that I may enter into the joy of thee my Lord.

Awake, O my soul, to righteousness, and sin not; that we may be glorified together when I shall be awakened by the last trumpet to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, for watching over me this night past.

Directions.

While your body is busied in dressing itself, adorn your mind with spiritual and religious meditations. Let the miscarriages of others, and your own daily experience, teach you to guard against those temptations into which business or company too frequently lead us: And resolve to embrace and contrive to the utmost how to improve every occasion that shall offer itself, for the service of God, the good of your neighbour, and the salvation of your own soul, in the course of that day.

Then being dressed, according to your ability and present calling, kneel down before God, and seal your good resolutions with the following preparatory prayer.

A Preparatory Prayer, for God's Grace and Assistance.

ASSIST me mercifully, O Lord, in all my supplications and prayers; and dispose the way of me thy servant towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, I may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help, thro' Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

The Morning Prayer for every Day.

MOST gracious Lord God! the spring of all our comforts here, and the sure and certain foundation of all our hopes hereafter, in whom I live, move, and have my being, look down

down from heaven upon *me*, who humbly beg leave to renew my thanks to thy Divine Majesty. *I* confess, that under thy protection *I* have this night slept secure ; and praised be thy holy name, that *I am* now in health and safety ; therefore as long as *I* live, *I* will magnify thee for *my* creation, *my* preservation, and all the blessings and comforts *I* enjoy. O then ! most merciful Father, forgive me all the unworthy returns *I* have made for the manifold favours *I* have received from thee, and grant *me*, for the time to come, such a sense of thine infinite goodness and mercy, that *I* may love thee with all *my* heart, with all *my* soul, and with all *my* strength, that *I* may study to please thee in all things, and be afraid of nothing so much as thy wrath and indignation. And that *I* may serve thee as *I* ought to do, preserve *me* from all the power of insnaring objects, and make *me* truly sensible of the vanity of this world ; neither permit *me* to be brought under the dominion of those lusts, which war against the soul. Grant *me* a right understanding of thy will, and grace so to use this world, as not to abuse it ; so that neither the cares of this life, nor the deceitfulness of riches, may ever make *me* neglect the great work of *my* salvation. Create in *me*, O God ! a clean heart, and root out thereof all covetous affections and desires, and let it be *my* great care and concern to lay up a treasure in heaven, and provide for eternity ; so that being delivered from pride and vain-glory, from a fond conceit of *myself*, or a mean opinion of others, from a censorious and uncharitable spirit, from an envious and malicious temper, and from all those sinful and corrupt affections, that are so hateful in thy sight, *I* may be endued with that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure and then peaceable ; with that meekness and humility which is in thy sight of so great price ; and with all those holy and christian dispositions that thou lovest, and which thou delightest to find in the sons of men. Oh ! grant *me* always a true sense of *my* own frailty, of the shortness and uncertainty of this life, and of the eternity of that which is to come, that *I* may always be careful so to live, as *I* shall wish *I* had done when *I* come to die. Let neither sickness nor death ever surprisè *me*, nor find *me* in a state unprovided ; but grant, that *I* may finish the great work of *my* salvation before the night comes, when no man can work ; that so having laid up a good foundation of hope and comfort against the day of trouble and sickness, *I* may, whenever thou shalt be pleased to call *me* hence, cheerfully resign up *my* soul into thy hands ; and this *I* most humbly pray through the merits and for the sake of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, *my* Saviour.

Assist *me*, O Lord, this *(On Sunday Morning, instead of the opposite Paragraph, say,*
 day in all *my* honest labours and endeavours, and grant that *I* may take
 nothing in hand but what *I* bleis thee also for the appointment of one day in seven for our rest, and thy more peculiar worship ; and

is agreeable to thee *my* God, to whom also *I* humbly beg leave to commend *my* soul and body, and all that stand in any relation to *me*; beseeching thee of thy great goodness to take us under thy protection, and defend us from all evil, and lead us in the way we should go; so that whilst we are engaged about things temporal, we may not forget the things that are eternal, nor be unmindful of that great account which we must give when thou shalt call us to judgment at the last day. O! leave us not to ourselves, but guard us from those snares and temptations that every where surround us in this body of corruption. Guide us by thy good Spirit thro' the affairs and business of this life, that we may at last arrive at that place of everlasting rest and peace, which thou hast prepared for those who truly and sincerely love and fear thee, thro' the merits and intercession of the same thy beloved son, Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose most comprehensive words, *I* offer up *my* imperfect prayers, saying as he hath taught *me*,
Our Father, &c.

grant that *I* may observe it according to thy commandment, as a means to promote a holy and virtuous life, and to prepare *my* soul for the enjoyment of the most glorious and delightful praises, which is the happiness and employment of angels and the souls of just men made perfect. And wherein *I* have offended thee by *my* negligent performance of those holy duties, which *I* ought to perform on this *thy* holy day, be not provoked to withdraw the assistance of thy Holy Spirit from *me*, and to leave *me* to the folly and vanity of *my* own will, but forgive *me* all *my* past offences, and mercifully hear *my* prayers, and let *my* cry come unto thee in the day of *my* necessity. Preserve the universal church, and bless every christian assembly with thy gracious presence; hear the prayers they shall this day put up, and make the word effectual to the pulling down the kingdom of Satan, and to the building up of the church of Christ in sound faith and real virtue; that so thy word, coming with power into every conscience, may have a due and saving effect upon the minds of all that hear and read the same. Give a plentiful portion of thy good Spirit upon all who by sickness, imprisonment, or any other impediment, are detained from partaking of the means of grace *I* enjoy; and mercifully relieve and help them in their straits and afflictions. And, O most gracious Father! pardon *my* sins and imperfections, and relieve all *my* necessities, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who has taught *me* thus to pray.

Our Father, &c.

Directions.

Here, if your time will permit, add the prayers of general Intercession and Thanksgiving, as you find them in page 324, before you use the concluding prayer.

The concluding Prayer.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all now and for evermore. *Amen.*

The Intercession.

MOST gracious God! whose mercy is over all thy works, I beseech thee to extend thy pity and compassion to the whole race of mankind; let the bright beams of thy gospel shine into the corners of all the earth, that those that sit in darkness may come to the knowledge and practice of thy laws, and their souls be saved in the great day, when thy Son Christ Jesus shall come to judge the earth. And I most humbly pray, that thou wilt pardon the great and crying sins of this nation, and turn from us the evils which we have most justly deserved; stop all prophaneness, irreligion and impiety, and compose all our unhappy animosities in church and state, so that truth and justice, brotherly love and charity, may ever flourish and abound. Defend thy holy catholick church, and that part especially of the communion of saints, which thou hast planted in these kingdoms; heal the breaches and divisions thereof; and for the sake of us all, preserve thy servant *GEORGE*, our king; protect his person, direct his counsels, prosper his government, and make him an instrument, in thy hand, of great good to these kingdoms and all his subjects. Direct the pastors and governors of thy church, with a spirit of true religion and goodness, and make them zealous and diligent to promote it in all those whom thou hast committed to their care. Adorn the nobility, the magistrates, and gentry, and commons of these realms, with wisdom, grace, and good understanding, that they may all study to serve thee, and to discharge the duties of their several stations, always remembering the great account which they must one day give at the judgment-seat of Christ. Relieve all that are in any affliction or distress; that labour under poverty or persecution, under bodily pains or diseases, or under temptation or trouble of mind, and in thy good time deliver them out of all their trouble and distress. Bless with the choicest of thy graces all my friends and relations, [particularly my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, my dear wife and children, [if you have any such near relations,] pardon all our sins, unite our hearts in a mutual love of each other; and vouchsafe to every one of us, and to all others, that either pray for me, or desire my prayers, whatever thy infinite wisdom knows to be most expedient for us. Requite all those who have been any ways instrumental to my good, according to their works; and forgive those that have done or wished me evil, and grant them repentance and better inclinations. All which I offer up unto thee, and humbly beseech thee to grant, for the sake and through the merits of thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

The Thanksgiving.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, I offer up unto thy divine majesty my unfeigned praises, in return for all those numberless mercies and benefits which thou hast vouchsafed unto me; but I more particularly bless thy holy name for the mercies I have received, for my deliverance from sin and the temptations which have been conquered by me, and for all the good that I have done; for preserving me in health and safety; for the plentiful provision which I enjoy by thy goodness; and for the continuing to me the enjoyment of so many comforts; as also for delivering me from the evils, which I have most justly deserved, and to which I am continually exposed by the weakness of my nature, and the power of the enemy. Yet above all I laud and magnify thy glorious name for the incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection and ascension of my Saviour, thy Son, Jesus Christ, who is the foundation of all thy mercies, and the author and finisher of my faith; in whose name alone I have a right to pray to thee, and to sum up all my prayers and praises, saying, *Our Father, &c.*

Directions.

Then rising from your knees, if your time and business will permit, improve your soul by reading some portion of holy scripture, more especially of the New Testament. But first, beseech your heavenly Father to assist you with his Holy Spirit, that you may so understand and practise his Word, that it shall make you wise unto salvation, in some such form as here followeth.

A Prayer for the right Use of the Holy Scriptures.

Blessed Lord! who hast caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning: grant that I may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them; that I may, by patience, and comfort of thy holy word, embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given me in my Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Directions.

In reading the great mysteries of faith, prostrate your reason in revelation, and lift up your heart continually to God in some short sentence agreeable to the subject you are reading, after the manner following. And reading a little at a time, digest it well for thy comfort and practice. And if time shall permit, read some part of this New Whole Duty of Man; for variety is found not only to please, but to be the best way to instruct human nature.

Ejaculations,

To be used while reading the Scripture.

ORD, give me grace to obey this command.

Or,

D d z

Lord,

326 *Directions and Prayers for Evening.*

Lord, deliver *me* from this temptation, this sin, or this judgment.

Or,

Glory be to thee, O Lord, for this mercy.

Or,

Lord, grant *me* thy grace to make *my* calling and election sure.

Directions and Prayers for Evening.
Directions.

At night spare some time before thou goest to bed for thy devotions, and laying aside all business and company, retire to thy closet, and begin with

The Preparatory Prayer.

O God! send into *my* soul thy Holy Spirit to help *my* infirmities; and so dispose *my* mind, and prepare *my* heart, that *my* prayers and praises may be acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ, *my* Lord. *Amen.*

Directions.

To this add the prayer in page 325, for a right use of the holy scriptures; and then read some portion of holy scripture, and of this New Whole Duty of Man, in the manner as directed in the morning, page 325. And having composed thy thoughts, pray to God to enlighten thy memory in the examination of thy past life, saying,

A Prayer for sincerity in the examination and acknowledgment of our Sins to God.

O Eternal God! who searchest the hearts, and triest the reins of man, and knowest his thoughts long before, dispose *me* frequently to examine the state of *my* own mind, and to compare *my* actions with the rule of thy laws: raise in *me* an abhorrence of whatsoever offends thee, that *I* may always turn *my* feet unto thy testimonies; and let neither self-love, sloth, negligence, nor any other darling passion, so impose upon or divert *me* from searching into the corruptions of *my* own heart, as to escape *my* repentance; but vouchsafe *me* the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, that *I* may so impartially judge and condemn *myself*, that *I* may not be condemned at thy fearful judgment-seat; and that in a full discovery of *my* own vileness *I* may humble *myself* under the rod of thy divine justice, and from *my* heart condemning all those follies whereby *I* have provoked thy wrath and indignation against *me*, *I* may earnestly solicit thy pardon and forgiveness, thro' the merits of thy Son, Jesus Christ, *my* Lord. *Amen.*

Directions.

Then examine your conscience by this short method.

A short Form of Examination of Conscience.

WHAT fin have I committed this day in thought, word, or deed?

What opportunity of doing good have I neglected?

Have I omitted or carelessly performed my religious duties?

Have I done any injustice to my neighbour in his body, family, goods or reputation?

Am I willing to make him restitution, as I am able?

Am I ready, as God hath forgiven me in Christ Jesus, to forgive such as have offended me?

Directions.

To the above may be added such other questions as your particular circumstances may require, which you will find more particularly set forth in the general heads of Examination, which follow hereafter in these devotions, before the prayers for the sacrament. And then confess your own guiltiness to Almighty God in this or some such form as follows:

A Form of Confession.

Almighty and most merciful Father; I have erred and strayed from thy ways like a lost sheep. I have followed too much the devices and desires of my own heart. I have offended against thy holy laws. I have left undone those things, which I ought to have done; and I have done those things, which I ought not to have done; and there is no health in me. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon me, a miserable offender. Spare me, O God, who confess my faults; cleanse me from all my secret and unknown transgressions, and be reconciled unto me, who am heartily sorry for my sins, and grieved that I have offended thee. Reserve not my sins to be punished in the day of thy fierce anger; but spare me; and grant that I may never fall into those evils, which my sins have justly deserved of thy justice. Restore me that am penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind, in Christ Jesu, my Lord. And as there is nothing I so much desire as to be of the number of thine elect; for thy favour is better than life itself, and the most perfect freedom is not to be compared to thy service; grant me strength by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit to forsake all my sins, and to reform whatever has been amiss in the temper and disposition of my mind, or in any of the actions of my life, that, when I depart hence, I may be received into that blessed state, where sin and death shall have no dominion over me; all which I beg for the sake and in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Directions.

After which acknowledgment of your own corruption and unworthiness, renew your resolutions of amendment, and beg for mercy thro' Christ; and this not slightly, and only as of course, but with as much devout earnestness, as if you were sure that

death were as near approaching as your sleep, which, for aught you know, may be so indeed: and therefore you should no more venture to go to bed and to sleep unrecommended to God, than you would dare to die in that miserable state.

Then offer up unto God the tribute of your evening sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, as well for his usual and daily preservations, as for his extraordinary deliverances; and above all endeavour by the consideration of his mercies to have your heart the more closely knit to him, remembering that every favour received from God, is a new engagement upon you to love and obey him still more and more.

The Evening Prayer for Every Day.

O Most glorious Lord God, although I know that thou hatest iniquity with a perfect hatred, yet I am assured also, that thou delightest in the ways of mercy; that thou art a tender lover of souls; and not only permittest, but invitest us, miserable creatures, to come unto the throne of thy grace, to be protected under the shadow of thy wings. Therefore, O Lord! with humble confidence, I lift up my soul unto thee, beseeching thee not to cast me away from thy presence; but, for the sake of my dear Redeemer, receive me graciously to thy mercy, and let the merit of his bitter death and passion atone for all my follies and miscarriages. Pardon, I meekly beseech thee, whatever I have done amiss this day, and all my life past, either against thee, my neighbour, or myself. Cleanse me from all my secret and unknown transgressions, and grant that I may seriously consider and reflect upon the foulness and deformity of sin, and what dreadful threatnings thou hast denounced against it; that I may become a true and sincere mourner for my past sins; and, as far as is possible, redeem my mis-spent time, by employing the remainder of my days to thy service, and to thy glory for ever. Teach me so to number my days, that I may become wise unto salvation; and give me that hatred and abhorrence of sin and iniquity, that I may abstain from every kind and sort of evil, which is abominable in thy sight, and hurtful to my soul. Breathe into me, O Lord, a new heart, new affections, and new desires, that I may love thee with more sincerity, and serve thee with greater faithfulness than I have ever done before. Open my eyes to behold the vanity and uncertainty of all things here below, and grant that I may make thee my only joy and my delight, my stay and my trust, my guide and my counsellor; and grant that in the days of health and prosperity, I may consider my latter end, and remember and provide for that great account which I must one day give before the judgment-seat of Christ; that when the hour of my departure shall come, I may meet death without fear or amazement, and with a well-grounded hope of thy mercy and goodness may cheerfully resign my soul into thy hands, when

thou

thou, *my* God, in thy great wisdom, shalt see it fitting to call *me* to thyself. *I* most humbly beseech thee, O Lord! who art thoroughly acquainted with all our wants, and knowest what is best and most fitting both for our souls and bodies, to be gracious to all *my* friends and relations, [and more particularly to *my* father, mother, brothers, sisters, friends, &c. if you have any.] And *I* in the deepest sense of gratitude to thee, *my* Lord and Maker, pray that thou wilt accept of *my* unfeigned praises for all thy blessings, for *my* health and safety, and all the comforts of *my* life, and the redemption of mankind, and the means and hopes of glory, which proceed from thy bounty and goodness.

* To thee therefore *I* ascribe all possible praise and thanksgiving, humbly beseeching thee to grant *me* the continuance of thy mercy and goodness, and to take *me* and *them* and all that belong to *me* this night under thy care and protection, preserving us from all perils and dangers, and giving us such refreshing rest and sleep, as may fit us for the duties of the day following; and if thou art pleased to add another day to our lives, grant that we may make a right use and improvement thereof, to thy glory, and the benefit of our immortal souls, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name and words *I* farther pray, saying,

Our Father, &c.

(On Sunday evening, before the paragraph mark'd * in the opposite column, say,

And if *I* have come without due preparation to thy holy worship, and been heedless and unattentive in hearing thy holy word, *I* now present *myself* this evening of *thy* holy-day before thee, acknowledging that and all *my* manifold sins, by which *I* have deserved thy just displeasure and indignation; and humbly pray thee, for Jesus Christ's sake, to forgive all that is past; to guide *me* in the ways of thy truth and holiness; to help *me* to set thee always before *my* eyes, that *I* may always fear and dread to offend thee *my* God.

[Then conclude as follows.]

The concluding prayer.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with *me* now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Directions.

Here if time permits add the prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving, in pages 324, 325.

Ejaculations or short Sentences to be said in bed.

I Will lay me down in peace and take my rest; for it is thou, O Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.

Into thy hands I commend my Spirit; sweet Jesu receive my Soul! For thou hast redeemed me, O Lord thou God of truth.

Occasional PRAYERS.

A Morning prayer to be used by a young Person.

A Almighty God, who art the kind author of my being, so inspire me with that wisdom which is from above, that I may constantly walk in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments, that I may be preserved from all temptations and the ways of the destroyer. Accept of my unfeigned thanks for all the blessings I daily receive from thy providence, and for my last night's particular preservation and refreshment. Have mercy upon me, and forgive me all my sins; and give me grace to flee from all youthful foolish passions and sinful desires, and that I may always walk as in thy presence, ever mindful of my latter end. Bend my heart with that awful tenderness for my parents, and for those that have the care of me, and with that christian sense of my duty towards them, that my language may be respectful, my actions dutiful, and my whole behaviour such, that I may prove a comfort and blessing to them, who take so much care of me. Increase my knowledge in such things as I am taught, and deliver me from sloth and idleness, bad company, and from all dangers both of body and soul; that I may increase daily in the knowledge and love of thee, my God, and of thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord. Accept of my humble petition for [*my father, mother, brethren, sisters, &c. if you have any,*] all my friends and relations, all this family, and the whole race of mankind: and grant unto us all those graces and blessings, which thou knowest to be most needful for the attainment of everlasting life. And now, my God and my Lord, I freely offer unto thee my soul and my body, beseeching thee to take them into thy care and protection, that they may be always employed in thy service and to thy glory; and having faithfully served thee in this life, I may at last obtain life everlasting, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, who has taught his disciples thus to pray, saying,

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer to be used by a young Person.

MOST mighty Lord and everlasting God, I most humbly beseech thee to pardon me in whatsoever I have offended thee this day, either in thought, word, or deed. [*here mention such particulars as you can remember.*] Enable me to resist and subdue every evil inclination within, and every outward temptation. Assist me daily with thy Holy Spirit, to increase in the knowledge and love of thee my God, and of my Saviour Jesus Christ. Teach me the paths of thy commandments whilst I am young. Sanctify whatever good instructions I have at any time received from the piety and care of my parents, guardians and teachers;

teachers ; help me carefully to remember them, and seriously to practise them. And I praise thy holy name for all the blessings thou hast this day, or at any time shewn me ; for all the helps of preventing or restraining grace thou hast vouchsafed me ; for whatever I have done, which may be in any measure acceptable to thee ; for all the progress I have made in my learning ; for thy preservation of me from all the calamities and dangers which frail mortality is every moment exposed unto ; [and particularly for—*here mention any particular blessings you recollect God has bestowed upon you this day.*] Take, I pray thee, my soul and body into thy care this night ; bless and protect me : and all the mercies which I beg for myself, I heartily desire for all my friends and relations, and for all men ; that we may be all so guided in this present life, as to arrive safe in thy heavenly kingdom, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour ; in whose most holy name and words, I further call upon thee, saying,

Our Father, &c.

A Morning Prayer for a Servant.

O God, the great creator and preserver of all mankind ; I bless and praise thy holy name for all thy mercies to my soul and body : and as thou hast given me another day, give me grace to spend it to thy honour and glory. I confess my corruption, do thou confirm and strengthen me ; create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me : and inflame my heart with thy holy faith and love ; that I may delight in thy commandments ; that I may walk before thee in uprightness and fear, in faithfulness and honesty ; constantly and cheerfully depending upon thee ; and doing the duty of my station, not with eye-service, but with singleness of heart, as knowing that I shall be accountable to thee at the last day, as well for those duties which I owe my master and mistress, as for those which are more immediately to be paid to thee my Creator, Preserver, and future Judge. Keep my tongue from all opprobrious and reproachful language ; from all lying and slandering ; and my hands from all injustice and deceit, that I may neither waste my time nor spare my labour, which are my master's by contract and agreement. Give me always a thankful, humble, and contented spirit ; send thy blessing upon this whole family to which I belong ; sow in all our hearts the seeds of unfeigned charity, that we may all enjoy the comforts of a mutual affection, and assistance and aid in our several stations ; and grant that we may meet in the family of heaven, there to adore and praise thee, love and enjoy thee to all eternity, through Jesus Christ my Lord, in whose most holy name and words, I presume to say

Our Father, &c.

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An Evening Prayer for a *Servant*.

THOU, O God, art my strength, and the rock of my salvation: It is true, and I am contented that thou hast called me to be a servant; but thou hast called me to be a son also, and an heir of eternal life; yet I have forgotten thee, being more solicitous for the bread that perishes, than for thy favour, which is better than all the world. I have sinned against my knowledge, thy word, and the motions of the Holy Ghost, by repining and murmuring at thy providence, and being discontented with my condition, [*here mention thy particular sins.*] Of which, O my God, and of all my sins I repent, and humbly beg the assistance of thy grace, that I may do works meet for repentance, and serve thee in truth, and with an upright heart, all the days I have to live. O Lord have mercy upon me, and forgive me all my offences; and give me grace to withstand the world, the flesh and the devil; and sincerely to endeavour to reform and amend my life; that I may every day grow and increase in goodness, and be so much the fitter for death, the nearer I approach thereto: O give me grace to discharge my duty faithfully. Watch over me, and the whole family to which I belong, and let thine angels pitch their tents about us this night, that we may lie down securely; and let our sleep be sweet and refreshing to us, for Jesus Christ his sake; in whose most holy name and words, I beg all things that I am any way bound to pray for, saying. *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer for *Faith in God*.

ALmighty and everlasting God! give unto me the increase of faith, that I may obtain that which thou dost promise; and make me heartily to believe what thou hast revealed, and to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for an *holy Hope*.

O God, in whom is all my dependence, and the hope of all the ends of the earth, let me never be destitute of a well-grounded hope, nor yet possessed with a vain presumption; suffer me not to think that thou wilt either be reconciled to my sins, or reject my repentance: but grant me such a hope, as may be answerable to thy righteous promises; even such a hope, as may both encourage and enable me to purify myself from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, that so it may indeed bring me to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the *Love of God and his Laws*.

MOST mighty Lord God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto me thy servant, that I may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise: that so among the sundry and

and many changes of this world, my heart may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found. And because of the weakness of my mortal nature, I can do no good thing without thee; grant me the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments I may please thee in will and deed, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Sincerity towards God.

Almighty God! to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, and dost not only require outward acts of duty, but the inward disposition of the mind; teach me in all my religious actions always to have an eye to thy authority, to obey thy laws, and to make the sense of my duty the prevailing motive of my piety: so that no privacy nor retirement may encourage me to offend thee, nor any losses nor crosses may hinder me from doing or suffering thy blessed will and pleasure. Oh! grant me always that sincerity of intention, that devotion may not be made a pretext to cheat and defraud my neighbour; nor yet the exercise of justice and mercy towards men, be made a plea for the neglect of my duty towards thee, my God; and that my charity to the poor may never serve to cover my intemperance; nor my sobriety exempt me from feeding the hungry, and cloathing the naked, when it is in my power. And finally, make my life all of one piece, that all the duties thou commandest may be shewn forth by my actions; that, my greatest desire and aim being thy glory, I may be accepted by thee through the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Sincerity towards Men.

Grant, O Lord! that in all my dealings and conversation with my fellow-creatures, I may always use true simplicity and singleness of heart, and never compass any design by false devices and appearances; nor betray my neighbour, by not performing my promise: that I may never abuse men into a false opinion of themselves, by representing them to be better than I know them to be; nor permit my tongue to speak otherwise than out of the abundance of my heart: so that my outward actions may be exactly agreeable to my purposes and intentions; and this I beg in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Humility.

MOST gracious God, who hast sent thy beloved Son to take upon him our human nature, that he might be to us a perfect pattern of humility, enable me by thy grace to imitate the same; and make me sensible of my own vileness by reason of my sins, which are evident proofs of my weakness and folly; and of my baseness and ingratitude, which make me contemptible in thy sight, and ought to cover my soul with shame and confusion,

fufion, instead of pride and vanity. Check all my vain and aspiring thoughts, and wean me from any fond opinion of my own abilities and excellencies. Oh ! strengthen my faith and good resolutions, that I may never purchase the praise of men by mean flatteries, and sinful compliances ; nor ever entertain their applause, even upon the best account, with too great delight, lest it corrupt the purity of my intentions, and rob me of that reward thou hast promised to all those that glorify thy name. And especially, I pray, make me patiently to bear the indignities I may receive from others ; because I have deserved them from thee, and because thy Son has suffered the same upon my account ; grant this, O Lord ! for the sake of the same thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Fear of God.

Almighty God ! whose power is infinite, and whose judgments are to be feared, possess my soul with an holy awe and reverence towards thee, that I may give thee the honour due to thy name, and never prophane any holy thing, nor sacrilegiously invade what thou hast set apart for thy service. I believe that as thou art infinite in justice, thou wilt not clear the guilty ; which should make me tremble at the very thought of whatever offendeth thee : therefore let me not so misplace my fear, as to be afraid of man ; but fill my soul with that fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom ; that I may thereby bridle all my brutish appetites, and keep myself in a constant conformity to thy holy laws ; and this I humbly beseech thee to grant unto me, thy servant, in the name of Jesus Christ, thy Son, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Trust in God.

MOST merciful God, give me grace in all difficulties and distresses to have recourse unto and to depend on thy power, goodness, and promises. And, as thou hast promised to keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid on thee, suffer not my heart to be overcharged with the cares of this life ; but grant, that having by honest industry, and the use of all lawful means, done my part, I may chearfully submit myself to thy providence, casting all my care upon thee ; and that seeking first thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, I may stedfastly trust in thee for such a measure of these outward things, as thou, in thy wisdom, seest to be most expedient for my advancement to the kingdom of thy Son ; to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Our Benefactors.

Almighty and everlasting God, who makest me both to will and to do those things that be good and acceptable to thy divine Majesty ; I make my humble supplications to thee for all my benefactors. Let thy fatherly hand, I beseech thee, ever be

over 'em; let thy Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Acts of Contrition, with Petitions for Pardon and Grace, that we may reform and amend our Lives.

O Lord, remember not the sins and offences of my youth, but according to thy mercy think thou upon me.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin, for it is great.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults.

Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Shew me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths.

Pity, O Lord, the present frailty of thy servant, and suffer not my blindness to lead me into ruin.

Suffer not my frailties to become habitual, lest I die impenitent, and perish without recovery.

O thou great Physician of souls, cure me of all my sinful distempers, and fix me in an even and constant holiness.

Imprint on my mind this important truth; That the pleasures of sin are short and momentary, but the pain and torment eternal; and, that the best that can follow is a bitter repentance.

Almighty Lord God, mortify and kill all vices in me; and so strengthen me with thy grace, that by the innocency of my life, and the constancy of my faith, I may glorify thy great and holy name.

Grant me the true circumcision of the Spirit, that my heart and all my members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, I may in all things obey thy blessed will.

Grant that I being regenerate, and made thy child by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, till I come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, unto a perfect man.

Enable me to love my enemies, and to do good to those that hate me, and to pray for them that despitefully use me, and persecute me; in obedience to the command, and in imitation of the example, of my great Lord and Master Christ Jesus.

A Prayer for a meek and quiet Spirit.

O Father almighty, and God of all comfort, look with thy tenderest pity upon me, a weak and frail creature, who

am encompassed about with many and great infirmities. My nature is corrupt, my passions are strong and violent, and I am so prone to peevishness and anger, that almost every slight provocation disorders my mind. This is what I bewail and lament, humbly beseeching thee to pardon all this my sin and folly, and to give me a meek and quiet spirit, a patient and forgiving temper, and an humble, charitable and christian disposition; that my mind may at all times be quiet and easy, my carriage gentle, kind, and obliging to all men; and the whole conduct and deportment of my life such as becomes the disciples of the meek and blessed Jesus, who has taught me when I pray to say, *Our Father, &c.*

A Prayer for *Chastity*.

HOly, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts! who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, whose Holy Spirit delighteth to dwell in pure and chaste hearts, I most humbly beseech thee to send thy spirit of purity and holiness into my heart, and preserve me chaste and spotless, clean and undefiled in thy sight; that my body may be an holy temple, and my soul a sanctuary fit for the reception of thy divine holiness. Forgive me all my past impurities, whether in thought, word, or deed; reprove in me the spirit of lust; kindle the fire of thy holy love in my heart, and let it consume all my dross; that I may no more grieve thy blessed spirit by any work of darkness; but after a chaste and religious life here, I may be presented before thy tribunal, washed and cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, and reign with thee for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *Temperance*.

O God, who madest every thing good, and givest all things richly to enjoy, give me the spirit of temperance and sobriety, that I may use thy creatures in the same measure and to the same purposes for which thou hast designed them. Forgive that intemperance, which I have been guilty of [*particularly* *] in meat, drink, apparel and pleasure; and never let my body any more be oppressed with surfeiting and drunkenness, or the luxuries of this sensual life; but subdue my appetite to reason and to thy grace, that my table may be no more a snare unto me, nor my food become a temptation, a sin, or a disease; but that I may henceforward hunger and thirst after righteousness, and account it my meat and drink to do thy will, through Jesus Christ, my Lord. *Amen.*

* *Here mention what you find yourself most guilty of.*

A Prayer for *Patience*.

O My God! who hast told me, that we in this world shall have tribulation; grant that my present tribulation may work patience, and that I may be submissive under the load thou hast thought

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thought fit to lay upon me, whether it be thy immediate correction, or the injuries with which my fellow creature endeavours to oppress me; and forasmuch as I suffer no more than the common lot of all sinful mortals, strengthen me, O Lord, that no pains or sufferings ever drive me from thee; but rather be a means to work in me a contempt of this world, a mortification of my lusts, and a patient abiding of the cross: so that I may finish my course with joy, and at the last, rest from all my labours and troubles, with the redeemed and blessed of the Lord; which I wait and humbly beg for at thy good hands, O most gracious Father, for the sake and in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A prayer for *Diligence.*

A Almighty God, who hast commanded man to till the earth, and to provide for his own subsistence by his own labour and industry, when thou mightest justly have punished him eternally; enable me to fulfill thy command; and with care, diligence and honest industry, grant that I may provide for myself and those committed to my charge, by improving the talent thou hast intrusted me with; and that I may make my calling and election sure, by a patient continuance in well doing: that so labouring in thy work here, I may, not for the merit of my own works, but for the merits of Jesus Christ, rest from my labours in thy kingdom hereafter. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *the Love* of our Neighbour.

MOST merciful God, suffer me to exclude none from my charity, who are objects of thy mercy and tenderness; but grant that I may assist all my brethren with prayers and good intentions, where I cannot reach them by works of mercy. Let me be always ready to embrace all occasions that may administer to their happiness, by assisting the needy, protecting the oppressed, instructing the ignorant, and reproving the wicked, prophane and evil doer, in such a manner, that I may look upon the defects and frailties of my neighbour, as if they were my own, and so hide and conceal them; so that making thy love to me, O God, the pattern of my love to them, I may above all things endeavour to promote their eternal salvation; and at last be received into the joy of my Lord, and sing everlasting praises to the Lamb that was slain, and sitteth on the throne, Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *Charity.*

O Lord, who hast taught me, that all my doings without charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth, is counted dead before thee. Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer for true *Piety* and *Regeneration*.

LORD of all power and might, who art the Author and Giver of all good things, graft in my heart the love of thy name, increase in me true religion, nourish me with all goodness, and of thy great mercy keep me in the same; so that being regenerate and made thy child by adoption and grace, I may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ my Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a *right Use* of our *Time*.

MOST gracious God! I adore thy infinite goodness and patience, which hath not cut me off in the midst of my follies and sins. Grant me therefore, gracious Lord, that I may no longer abuse that precious time, which thou hast allotted me, to secure that happiness, which is great in itself, and infinite in it's continuance. Call me from all those vain amusements, those trifling entertainments and cruel diversions, which have robbed me of many valuable hours, and have endangered the loss of my immortal soul in the day of judgment. O then! teach me so to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom; so that by diligence and honesty in my calling, by constancy and fervour in my devotions, by moderation and temperance in my pleasures and recreations, by justice and charity in all my words and actions, and by keeping a conscience void of offence both towards God and man, I may be able to give a good account thereof, when summoned before the judgment-seat of Christ; when I pray that I may be accepted in and through the merits of the same thy Son Jesus Christ, my only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the *Care* of the *Soul*.

GIVE me grace, O Lord! that I may prefer the good of my soul before all things, continually remembering that although it cannot die, it may sink into a state of endless punishment. Oh! therefore, free me from the charms and flatteries of this world, lest they dissolve me into luxury, excess, and other unlawful pleasures: neither permit the terrors or torments that wicked men are able to inflict, to shake my constancy, or interrupt my perseverance in the way of thy laws; but grant that I may proceed in the strength which thou hast given me, that being founded fast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, I may know that my labour is not in vain in the Lord; through Jesus Christ my Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the *Government* of the *Tongue*.

GOVERN my lips, O Lord! that I offend not in my tongue; and shut out such discourses as border the least upon evil speaking, lying and slandering: that it may never spread any evil reports concerning my neighbour's reputation, nor make the deformity

formity of his body, or the weakness of his mind, the subject of my mirth and raillery. Oh! grant that I may never be so weak as to encourage backbiters, either by listening to their insinuations, or by giving credit to their wicked inventions: But as thou hast given me a tongue that I might praise thee, and influence others to bless thy holy name, direct my words chiefly to the promoting of thy glory; either by asswaging the pains of the afflicted, vindicating the injured reputation of my neighbour, uniting the minds of those that are at variance, instructing those that know thee not enough, entertaining all the world, O God! with thy greatness and goodness, inflaming all hearts with thy love, and provoking them to praise thee, to bless thee, and to glorify thee; that I may one day mingle my praises with those of thy elect, translated to the mansions of eternal bliss, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used on *fasting Days*, and during the *forty Days* in Lent.

O God the Father, who for our sakes didst send thy Son into this world, for the sake of all mankind, and in human nature: didst appoint him to fast forty days and forty nights; give me grace to use such abstinence, that my flesh being subdued to the Spirit, I may ever obey thy godly motions, in righteousness and true holiness, to thy honour and glory, and the salvation of my own soul, thro' the merits and mediation of the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who with thee, and the holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *true mortification.*

A Lmighty god, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; grant me the true circumcision of the Spirit, that my heart and all my members being mortified from all worldly and fleshly lusts, I may in all things obey thy blessed will, thro' the same thy Son Jesus Christ, my Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

A prayer for *Repentance.*

O Most mighty God, and merciful Father, who hast compassion upon all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but that he should rather turn from his sin and be saved; mercifully forgive me my trespasses; receive and comfort me, whom thou hast redeemed; enter not into judgment with thy servant, who am vile earth, and a miserable sinner; but so turn thine anger from me, who meekly acknowledge my vileness, and truly repent me of my faults; and so make haste to help me in this world, that I may ever live with thee in the world to come, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *Assistance of Grace.*

O God! the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept my prayers; and because, through the

weakness of my mortal nature, I can do no good thing without thee ; grant me the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments, I may please thee both in will and deed, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer against inordinate Anger.

O God ! give to thy servant a meek and gentle spirit, that I may always be slow to anger, and easy to help and forgive ; grant that I may not be moved to intemperate wrath on every trifling occasion. Preserve me from a peevish and contentious spirit, and suffer me not so far to give place to the devil, as to bear hatred and malice in my heart ; and grant, that I may follow peace with all men, being meek, humble and merciful, bearing with the infirmities of others, and forgiving their offences, as I desire to be forgiven of thee, thro' the merits of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer under Losses and Damages in our Goods and Estate.

A Almighty God ! the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, the world is thine, and the fulness thereof. Teach me to be content as well when I am abased and suffer need, as when I abound : for, as it will profit a man nothing to gain the whole world, and to lose his soul ; so all the losses in the world cannot undo him, whose soul is safe in thy hands. Let me not grieve therefore, as if I were undone, for what I have lost ; but incline my heart to commit myself chearfully unto thee, as knowing that I have in heaven a better and an enduring substance of good things to come. And seeing how little any thing is to be considered in here on earth, grant that I may look less on temporal things ; and so provide for the good of my soul, and be so rich towards God, that when all here shall fail me, thou mayest be the strength of my heart and my portion for ever ; all which I humbly pray for, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer in Prosperity.

A Almighty and most gracious God ! who makest me to abound and to be full of thy good things, and surroudest me on every side with thy mercies, I acknowledge, bless and praise thee for all thy special favours towards me ; but whereas I know not what shall be on the morrow, nor how soon the sun may be hid from my eyes, I must not say in my prosperity, I shall never be moved. And grant that in the time of my health, and peace, and prosperity, I may remember, and provide for the time of trouble, sickness and death, when the enjoyments of this world will be so far from being able to support and relieve me, that they will vanish away. Oh ! give me grace also not to abuse the good things of this world, but always to use them in humility, sobriety, and thy holy fear ; and make me willing, as thou hast made me able, to refresh the bowels of such as want what I do enjoy ; and as freely to give, as I have received ; that riches may not be kept to my hurt, but as I have opportunity, enlarge my heart to do good

unto

unto all. If thou, O Lord, shouldst make me poor, or send me any other affliction, give me therewith a resigned and contented heart, that I may praise thy name always: and grant that whatever I here enjoy may never draw my heart from my duty, but that all my plenty may be blessed and secured to me with the fullness of thy grace; that so, being rich in good works, my soul may prosper, and be well in thy blessed favour, and made glad with thy saving mercy, and thy good acceptance of me, in and thro' the merits of thy Son my Redeemer, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be said by such as are *poor* and *low* in the World.

O God, I believe that for just and wise reasons thou hast allotted to mankind very different states and circumstances of life; and that all the temporal evils, which have at any time happened unto me, are designed by thee for my benefit. Therefore, though thou hast thought fit to place me in a mean condition, to deprive me of many conveniencies of life, and to exercise me in a state of poverty; yet thou hast hitherto preserved and supported me by thy good providence, blessed me with advantages * above many others, who labour under great troubles. And, O merciful Father, if thou seest fit, bless me with such a portion of the comforts and conveniencies of life, that thereby I may be enabled to go on more chearfully in my station, to serve thee better, to love thee more and more, and more admire thy wonderful bounty and loving-kindness; grant me health and strength, and abilities suited to my circumstances, that I may honestly provide for myself; support me, that I fall not into extreme want; lay not more upon me, than thou shalt enable me to bear with patience; and supply the want of worldly blessings, by the comfort and support of thy good spirit, whereby I may be made perfect in every good work, become rich in faith, and an heir of thy kingdom. Grant, O Lord, that I may exercise all those christian graces and duties, which my present circumstances call for from me; let the sharpness of temporal wants put me upon considering what misery must attend the loss of my soul: let a sense of my poverty stir up eager desires after the true riches; and the less I have of this world, the more careful let me be to provide for the next, and to seek an inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away; and let bodily hardships convince me of the great evil of spiritual wants. Inspire me with diligence and industry in my calling, and when I have done my endeavour, make me to cast all my care upon thee; that neither the contempt, which vain persons wrongfully cast upon poverty, nor any evil which I may endure, may tempt me to any dishonest ways of living; but let me chuse rather to be poor than wicked, and to want any thing rather than thy blessing. For which end, clothe me with a meek, and quiet, and humble spirit, and a thorough

thorough contentedness in my present circumstances; that I may neither dare to repine at my own condition, nor envy the prosperity of others. Raise up my heart to look unto Jesus, who, to reconcile man to a state of poverty, chose to be born and live in a mean condition, enduring hunger, and thirst, and cold, and not having where to lay his head: that by his example I may be encouraged to contemn the world; and through faith and patience having finished the race which thou hast set before me, I may be received into the joy of my Lord, for the sake of my Redeemer, thy ever-blessed Son Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer under any injuries, abuses or provocations.

○ God, whose beloved Son was evil intreated, tempted, reviled, spit upon, mocked, and persecuted even unto death; and his blessed disciples had also trials of cruel mockings, and scourgings, and of severe bonds and imprisonments: what then am I that I should expect to escape the injuries, abuses, and provocations of this world! therefore, Lord, such as my folly and miscarriage have made to be my enemies, incline my heart to peace, and enable me to appease and gain them to my friendship; and such as hate me wrongfully, pardon their sin, open their eyes, purify their minds, and convert their hearts unto thee; that they may see their fault, be reconciled to thee, O God! and then live, as much as in them lieth, in peace with all men, that we may at last live together in heaven; and for this end, mortify, I beseech thee, in all of us the carnal mind, which is at enmity against thee, and all those lusts which war in our members, from whence wars and fightings arise; and unite us all against the common enemy of our souls; and join all our hearts to thee; in thy true fear and love, that we may not meditate revenge, but study to be quiet; and this we humbly pray in the name of that great pattern of meekness, thy Son, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for our Persecutors.

○ God! whose nature and property is always to have mercy and to forgive, shew mercy I most humbly beseech thee, to all those that persecute me, though they neither shew justice nor mercy towards me: pity their ignorance, remove those prejudices that blind their eyes, sweeten and soften their spirits, that they may no longer be carried away with malice and bitter passions; but dispose them by humility and meekness, and by a sincere love of truth and righteousness, to a joyful reception and acknowledgment thereof; that they may lay aside their errors, and resolutely profess thy holy faith: so that their repentance may turn away thine eternal vengeance, through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

A.

A Prayer against Covetousness.

A Almighty God, the Author and Giver of all that I enjoy, govern my affections towards the things of this world, that no greediness of gain may tempt me to the least injustice, either by fraud or oppression; but that I may commit myself to thy providence in the use of honest endeavours; that while I am supporting a dying body, I may remember I have an immortal soul, which immediately deserves my greatest care: teach me to enjoy the good things, which thou hast blessed me with, as with temperance, so with thankfulness and charity, and readily to part with them, rather than to forsake thy truth, or to make shipwreck of a good conscience towards God or man. And this I beg in the name, and thro' the merits, of thy Son Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer for temporal Blessings, and Contentedness in any Condition.

Blessed Lord, who knowest that, while we are in this life, we stand in need of it's supplies, and hast promised to such as seek thy kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, the addition of all other necessities; and also hast commanded us to ask of thee our daily bread, and to cast our care upon thee for all the things we have need of for our comfort and support: give me such health and wealth, as shall be for my good, and, while I have life to be nourished, vouchsafe to grant, that I may not want the necessary blessings thereof: but enable me to provide honestly for myself, and add thy blessing to my labours; which if not sufficient to supply all my own necessities, do thou raise up friends and means to help me, that I may never be destitute of food and raiment; and give me grace to be content with that provision thy divine providence sees most convenient for me. Let neither prosperity be a means of my forgetting thee, nor adversity cause me to murmur against thy wise distributions to the sons of men. Teach me how to want, as well as how to live in plenty: and sanctify all the comforts thou hast, or shalt please to bestow upon me, that I may use them to thy glory, and that they may raise in me that due praise which I offer to thee my God, for all thy benefits to me and all the world, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used on our Birth-day.

O God! the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, and by whose blessed will I was fearfully and wonderfully made in my mother's womb, and under whose blessed providence I have been kept up ever since I was born; I praise and magnify thy glorious name for thy great goodness towards me; humbly beseeching thee, that I may be taught to number my days, so as to apply my heart to heavenly wisdom; that I may know that I was born to serve thee the living God; that I may bewail my past sins, and spend the rest of my days in a godly, righteous and sober life; that I may finish the remainder of my days in thy
fear

fear and to thy glory ; and that as thou didst (as on this day) take me out of my mother's womb to live here a little time, so thou mayest at the last day take me out of my grave, the womb of the earth, to live with thee for ever, thro' Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by one tempted to Presumption.

O Righteous Lord, suffer me not to encourage myself in a groundless reliance upon thy favour, whilst in the mean time I am really unfit to receive thy Holy Spirit ; neither let thy patience and forbearance hitherto with me work an expectation of my future happiness : and grant that I may make such a progress in holiness, as that I may safely depend upon thy mercy and protection in this world, and thy promise of eternal happiness in the world to come, not for any merits or works of my own, but purely thro' the merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer,

To be used by one troubled in Mind, or tempted to Despair.

A Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, I approach unto thee with confusion of face, to think that I should in any wise seem to distrust thy goodness and mercy, after I have so abundantly experienced thy great favours, and have thy promise that thou wilt hear the prayers of those that ask any thing in thy Son's name. O my God ! pardon me this thought, and give me thy grace to prevent it's growth ; and to conquer the temptation that oppresses my heart with a fear and horrid dread, lest my portion is decreed among the reprobates : For, I know, O mighty Lord ! I know thou art able and willing to save me a repenting sinner ; therefore speak peace to my oppressed soul, and give me assurance that thou art reconciled to me in the Son of thy Love ; and that thou art my sword and my shield at present, and wilt hereafter be my exceeding great reward. Oh ! lay not these doubts and fears to my charge ; and so dispose my mind, and confirm my trust and confidence in thee, that a remembrance of my sins may never drive me to despair of thy mercy, but on the other hand force me to flee to my Saviour, to sue for his intercession on my behalf, and may put me upon an unwearied attendance on my duty, thereby to fit me for a sure confidence in his all-sufficient merits. And, most gracious Lord, do not only pardon all my transgressions for his sake, but convince me, before I go hence and be no more seen, that thou hast done it for my satisfaction and comfort, that so I may here rejoice in thy favour, before I am taken into the joy of my Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer in time of Temptation.

A Almighty God, and most merciful Father, who art greater than all things, send down thy help from above, and deliver me from the temptations that now attack me ; and as I put my trust in thee, O let me never be put to confusion, nor suffer me to be

be tempted above that I am able to bear ; but make me a way to escape, that I may not sin against thy divine Majesty. Make me seriously to consider the great folly and danger of sin ; that it's pleasures are short, but that it's punishments are endless and intolerable ; that no satisfaction can compare with the joys of a good conscience, nor is any trouble like that of a wounded spirit. Give me a sure token of the terrible state of those who fall under the rod of thy displeasure. Convince my conscience of it's sinfulness of what I am now tempted unto, and shew me it's contradiction to thy will and my baptismal vows. Give me, I pray thee, the light of thy word, that I may not be deceived by this wicked world, but certainly know, that how pleasant soever it may now appear, there will come a time, when this and all other enticements of this world will appear vain and contemptible ; a time when all workers of iniquity shall be destroyed : and when a crown of righteousness shall be given to them who have fought the good fight, and kept the faith unto the end. Grant therefore, that the mighty power of thy grace may so raise my courage, and strengthen my faith, that nothing may stop me in my christian warfare ; but that fighting manfully under Christ's banner, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, I may at last triumph with him in his heavenly kingdom ; to whom with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by *one engaged* (or likely to be engaged) *in a Law-suit.*

A Almighty God, to whom all judgments belong, to thee I submit myself, in the cause wherein I am [*likely to be*] engaged ; convince me, if I am under any mistake : direct and assist me under all the difficulties and incumbrances which I am like to meet with ; and in thy good time put a happy and peaceable end to the business which I [*am about to undertake, or*] have begun. Oh ! grant me that wisdom from above, which is peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated ; that laying aside all fondness and partiality, I may continually practise that christian law, of doing as I would that others should do to me. So that contending for right more than victory, nothing may be done thro' malice, strife, pride, or vain-glory ; nor may I be prevailed upon to transgress the laws of justice and charity for any worldly advantage ; submitting the event to thy fatherly wisdom and disposition. Let the remembrance of thy mercies and forgiveness towards me fill my heart with such a christian love and compassion, that I may never contend with my neighbour to gratify my own corrupt nature, nor take delight in his sufferings ; but let the sense of what thou hast done and suffered for me banish all covetous desires from my soul, and excite in me a compassion towards thy distressed members ; for thy sake forgiving

giving my fellow servants, as I hope myself to be forgiven when thou shalt come to judge the quick and the dead at the last day. And this I most humbly beg for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by one that deliberates upon Marriage.

MOST gracious God! who hast instituted the holy estate of matrimony, as the only way to continue the world, and for the comfort of man's life under the various evils, cares and labours thereof, by the mutual society and help that married persons ought to have one for the other both in prosperity and adversity, and for the good of human society in general, grant that as I now have thoughts of entering into that state, I may so seriously consider the chief end of it's institution, and the solemn vow and promise I shall then make, as not to enterprise the same unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God; considering

This is to be used by one under the care of parents or guardians. that if I marry, my future happiness and misery of life will very much depend thereupon. [*And for as much as I am young, unexperienced in the ways of this life, and under the care and direction of others, give me an obedient heart, that I may hearken and submit to their good advice, and their better judgment in this matter, even as I expect thy blessing.*]

Grant that reason and religion, prudence and consideration, and, above all, thy good providence, may direct my choice. And let me also chiefly aim at religion and virtue, wisdom and discretion, and such other good qualities and dispositions in a partner, as are most likely to last and continue, and not only such as please for a time, and at last may prove the cause of discontent; and this I beg thro' the mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used by a Woman when with Child.

Almighty God, the fountain of life, I adore thy infinite wisdom, which has begun an excellent work in me, beseeching thee to perfect the same work of thy hand with due shapes and full growth, and preserve me from all frights and accidents, which might cause me to miscarry of this child. Strengthen and enable me to go through all the pains and uneasiness of child-bearing with patience and submission to thy will; give me an humble trust and dependence on thy fatherly care and good providence, and make me in thy good time a joyful mother of a hopeful child, which may be endued with an understanding soul, and blessed in mind as well as in body; that it may be able to know thy goodness, dread thy power and justice, and live to be an instrument of thy glory; and by serving thee faithfully, and doing good in it's generation, may in thy good time be received into thy everlasting kingdom, and joined to the spirits of just men made perfect, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer before making a Will.

GIVE me time, O Lord, before I go hence and be no more seen, to make such a discreet and prudent settlement of my worldly affairs, that I may do no injustice to any branch of my family. Be thou graciously pleased to entail a blessing upon the substance I shall leave behind me ; and let those to whom I give and bequeath it, rise up like olive-plants, and flourish under the protection of thy good providence. Oh ! let them not, like slothful servants, bury their talents in a napkin, or squander away their inheritance by riotous living ; but let them endeavour, by an honest industry, in their several stations and employments, to support themselves creditably in this world, and so wisely to manage their temporal concerns, as may most effectually conduce to the eternal interest of their immortal souls, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the King, the Royal Family, and for all Rulers and Magistrates.

ALmighty Lord, by whom kings do reign and princes decree justice, and who hast commanded me to pray for kings, and for all that are in authority ; I both in duty and inclination become a petitioner to thy Divine Majesty for *GEORGE* thy servant, our king Give thy judgments, O God ! unto the king, that he may judge thy people righteously, and break their enemies in pieces. Bless him with the spirit of government, to punish the wicked, and to reward the good. Make him sensible of his duty to thee, and his subjects obedient to him for thy sake, O God. Fill his heart with thy fear and love, that the righteous may flourish in his days, in abundance of peace, with the liberty and free profession of the gospel. Defend him from all secret conspiracies and open violence. Bless his arms with success and victory ; direct his councils, and prosper all his endeavours for the welfare of these nations ; so that his government may flourish with happiness and prosperity. And finally, grant that he may so rule in this earthly kingdom, till he come to live and reign with thee in thy heavenly kingdom for evermore. We humbly beseech thee to bless their royal highnesses *Frederick* prince of *Wales*, the princess of *Wales*, the duke, the princesses, the issue of the prince and princess of *Wales*, and all the royal family : endue them with thy Holy Spirit ; enrich them with thy heavenly grace ; prosper them with all happiness ; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom. Bless, O Lord, all our rulers and governors with spirits suitable to their stations, and make all that are put in authority under the king, that they may truly and indifferently administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue : so that they may be able to curb and suppress all vice and ungodliness, and defend and encourage whatever is holy, just, and righteous. Endue them with wisdom to understand, with hearts to con-

sider, and with abilities to repair the breaches, and to redress the grievances of all such as come before them. And grant that all rulers may so govern, and subjects so obey, that they may always deserve thy heavenly grace, assistance, protection and salvation; which I ask in the name, and for the sake and righteousness of thy Son, Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the *Clergy.*

O God, who of thy great goodness hast set apart an order of men on purpose to guide and govern us, to direct and assist us in matters of our eternal salvation; grant that all those, who dedicate themselves to the service of thy altar, may be inwardly moved by thy Holy Spirit to take upon them that sacred ministration; that their consciences may testify to them, that by engaging in this holy calling, their chief design is to serve thee, to promote thy glory, and to edify thy people; for which end I humbly pray that they may make thy word the chief object of all their studies; that they may from thence instruct thy people committed to their charge, and silence gainsayers; that they may faithfully and diligently administer thy holy sacraments; that they may labour in season and out of season, by private and public admonitions and exhortations; that they may maintain peace and love among all christians, and frame themselves and their families according to the precepts of thy holy gospel. Grant also that I may always reverence and respect them, because they have a peculiar relation to thee; that I may sincerely love them, because of those great benefits I receive by their administrations; that I may readily and cheerfully provide for their maintenance, because the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel, and that he that is taught in the word, ought to communicate to him that teacheth in all good things; that I may never rob them of their just rights by the least sacrilegious encroachment; that I may earnestly pray for them, because thy divine assistance is so necessary to crown their labours with success; for though Paul planteth, and Apollos watereth, it is thou, O Lord, that givest the increase. And above all, make me careful to obey them that have the rule over me, because they watch for my soul, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; that so by a faithful discharge of my duty to my spiritual superiors, I may continue a sound member of thy church here upon earth, and may live for ever in the society of the church triumphant in heaven, singing praises and hallelujahs to the blessed and glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the *Religious Societies.*

O Lord almighty, faithful and true, who by thy holy prophet* hast told us, That from the rising of the sun, unto the going

going down of the same, thy name shall be great among the gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto thy name, and a pure offering; for thy name shall be great among the heathen: Bless and prosper, I beseech thee, the endeavours of the Society established among us, for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts: Take thou from them, to whom the glad tidings of salvation shall be preached, all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word; so that thy word being sown in good and honest hearts, it may bring forth fruit abundantly to thy honour, and the salvation of their souls: And grant that all who have heard and received it, may live according to it's doctrine and precepts, and by holiness of life, and zeal for thy glory, may become eminent examples to all about them. Bless all the religious, and other societies amongst us, for christian conference and works of charity, for the promoting of christian knowledge and practice amongst the poor and ignorant, and for putting the laws in execution against the vicious and profane. O Lord, increase the number of these societies, and grant them all to chuse the best and most inoffensive means for accomplishing their several ends, and to prosecute them diligently, and with a zeal directed by wisdom and prudence. And grant, that all of them being free from all worldly interests, may stedfastly pursue the advancement of thy glory and the good of mankind. And grant, O God, that no good thou shalt vouchsafe to bring about by their poor endeavours, may tempt them to think highly of themselves, but modestly and humbly. Remove all unreasonable prejudices against their designs; shed forth thy love abroad in their hearts, and make them zealous of all good works: that they may chearfully embrace all opportunities of doing good to the souls and bodies of men, and not be discouraged at any difficulties or oppositions they may meet with. O God, hear their prayers for themselves and others; defend them from the rage of satan, and from the malice of evil men; perfect holiness more and more in their hearts; and unite them more to one another in thy truth, and in the bond of love; and make them zealous of all good works, according to the command and example of Jesus Christ, who went about doing good; for whose sake, I beseech thee to hear me. *Amen.*

The following Prayers and Thanksgivings are suited to the twelve ARTICLES of the Belief.

A Prayer to One GOD and Three Persons.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto all thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the unity; I beseech thee, that thou

wouldst keep me stedfast in this faith, and evermore defend me from all adversities; who livest and reignest one God, world without end. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving for the Birth of Christ.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden duty, that I should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God; because thou didst give Jesus Christ thine only Son to be born as at this time for me; who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother, and that without spot of sin, to make me clean from sin: therefore with angels and arch-angels, and with all the company of heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord, most high. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Benefits of Christ's death.

I beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into my heart, that as I have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ, by the message of an angel; so by his cross and passion, I may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection, thro' the same Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving for the Resurrection.

Almighty God, who, through thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto me the gate of everlasting life; I humbly beseech thee, that as by thy special grace guiding and assisting me, thou dost put into my mind good desires, so by thy continual help I may bring the same to good effect, thro' Jesus Christ, my Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving for the Ascension.

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden duty, that I should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God, thro' thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, my Lord, who after his most glorious resurrection manifestly appeared to his apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven, to prepare a place for me: that where he is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with him in glory. Therefore with angels and arch-angels, and all the company of heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord, most high. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Preparation for Judgment.

Almighty God, give me grace, that I may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon me the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life (in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit the world in great humility;) that in the last day, when he shall

shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and dead, I may rise to the life immortal, thro' him, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving for *the Descent of the Holy Ghost.*

IT is very meet, right, and my bounden duty, that I should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ my Lord; according to whose most true promise, the Holy Ghost came down from heaven, with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles to teach them, and to lead them into all truth; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness, with fervent zeal, constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations; whereby the world hath been brought out of darkness and error into clear light and true knowledge of thee and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with angels and arch-angels, and with all the company of heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord, most high. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *the Preservation of the Church.*

O Lord, I beseech thee to keep thy church and household continually in thy true religion, that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace, may evermore be defended by thy mighty power, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for *Forgiveness of Sins.*

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than I to pray, and art wont to give more than either I desire or deserve; pour down upon me the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving me those things whereof my conscience is afraid, and giving me those good things, which I am not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son, my Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Profession of our *Faith in the Resurrection.*

I Believe, that by the virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, all the dead shall rise, bad as well as good; for death is swallowed up in victory. I believe, that by the almighty power of Jesus Christ, all shall rise with the same bodies they had on earth; that their scattered dust shall be gathered into the same form again, that my soul shall be reunited to my body, that I shall be judged both in body and soul for the sins committed by both; that the bodies of the wicked shall be fitted for torments, and the bodies of the saints changed in quality, and made glorified bodies, immortal and incorruptible, fitted for heaven, and eternally to love and enjoy God; for which glorious vouchsafement I will always praise and love my Creator and Redeemer, to whom, with the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Life Everlasting.

GRANT, O Lord, that as I am baptised into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying my corrupt affections, I may be buried with him, and that through the gate and grave of death, I may pass to a joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died and was buried, and rose again for me, thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

A short Paraphrase or Explication

OF THE

*L O R D'S P R A Y E R.**Our Father, which art in Heaven.*

THIS is a solemn invocation on God, as the maker and governor of the world, and as the Father of all christians in Christ Jesus; in whose name alone it is, that I say, and hope for acceptance of this prayer. And I say *our Father*, and not *my Father*, because I believe God to be a common Father, whom all may resort unto, as also that I may declare my communion with, and good-will to all my brethren of the same household of faith. And I add *which art in heaven*; because the throne of his power and glory is in heaven. Hence we learn that God is the fountain of all goodness, and is able and willing to support us; that we ought to pray for others, as well as ourselves; and to join together in common prayer for common wants; and that whenever we present our petitions to him, we ought to do it with the most serious consideration, the profoundest humility, and the utmost devotion and reverence we are capable of.

Hallowed be thy Name.

THE Name of God here is to be extended and applied, not only to God himself, his titles and attributes, but to his word and ordinances; and to places, times, persons, and things separated from common use, and set apart for the honour and service of his name. That all and every one of them may be treated after an *holy* manner, by having such esteem and regard paid to them, as is due to each of them respectively. And from hence we learn, that the glory of God should be our chief aim, and the governing end of all our actions; that his name ought to be adored and magnified by us, and all the world; and that we should endeavour to promote the honour of it, by an exemplary behaviour in all other instances of piety and holiness.

Thy Kingdom come.

HERE we pray for the *coming* of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ; a kingdom of a spiritual nature: founded in direct opposition to the kingdom of satan, and for the destruction of sin and death; having it's beginning in grace here, and it's completion in eternal glory hereafter. Therefore in this petition we pray, that God would bring all those, who are yet in

a state

a state of darkness, into the pale of Christ's Church ; and that his grace would so rule in the hearts of all christians, that they may be fit to be translated to that kingdom, which is to be the portion of the saints in the world to come ; and this as soon as God pleases. By which we are taught, That it is our duty to beware of hindering the propagation of the gospel, or of endangering our own salvation, by giving any just occasion of offence : to subdue every rebellious lust, and to be obedient, even in our hearts and thoughts, to the spiritual laws of his kingdom : having no other ambition but to reign with Christ our king in his eternal glory.

Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

IN this petition, we request, that all rational creatures, being filled with the knowledge of God's will, and proposing that will as the rule of their actions, and the doing of it as the great business of their short time here on earth, may live under a sense of his over-ruling providence, and quietly submit to all, even the afflicting dispensations thereof, and may yield such an obedience to the laws given them to live by here, as the inhabitants of heaven do to the government under which they live, in the presence of God. And we must so far conform to this pattern, as to perform the commands of God, universally, without exception ; readily, without delay ; cheerfully, without uneasiness ; constantly, without intermission ; and sincerely, without hypocrisy. And then if our obedience only bear such a proportion to our present state and condition, as the obedience of angels does to theirs, we need not doubt our being made equal to them hereafter, in perfection both of obedience and happiness.

Give us this Day our Daily Bread.

IN this petition, we pray that God, upon whom all creatures depend for their subsistence, will be graciously pleased to give to us his children, day by day, all things necessary for our bodily sustenance, and sufficient also for the support of that condition of life, wherein his providence hath placed us ; and therewith his blessing also in the use and enjoyment of them. And it teacheth us to account that bread only to be our own, and the gift of God, which is procured by our honest labour and industry, or comes to us by some direct or lawful means ; and to rest satisfied and contented with that portion, whatever it be, which is dispensed to us in one or other of those ways. And likewise to provide, but not to be solicitous for futurity ; and with prayer for what we want, and thankfulness for what we have, entirely to depend upon our heavenly Father, for so much of this world's good, as he knows to be best for us, in order to that life to come, which we ought to be chiefly intent upon in this our mortal state.

Forgive

Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

IN this petition, by trespases against God are meant all sins, of what kind or degree soever : which being the great debts we owe to his vindictive justice, they are said to be forgiven, when the punishment of them is remitted by his mercy. And by trespases against us are meant the injuries, either by word or deed, done to us by any of our fellow-creatures : which if they be *small* and inconsiderable, may be said to be forgiven, when they are passed over, either without notice taken of them, or however, upon the acknowledgment of the offender. But if they be *great* wrongs, for which further satisfaction ought in reason to be made, then the forgiveness of them consists in forbearing personal revenge, and having recourse only to publick justice for recompence, if it cannot otherwise be obtained. Yet this is not a full discharge of the duty of christian forgiveness, unless we are also ready, as occasion offers, to perform all offices of humanity to those that have injured us, and do unfeignedly pray for their repentance and salvation. Which petition, thus explained, teaches us that we are all, in a higher or lower degree, sinners against God ; and that it is our duty, with undissembled confession of our sins, earnestly to implore his fatherly compassion in the forgiveness of them, for Christ's sake. And we further learn, that as charity in forgiving is an acceptable qualification of a penitent's prayer for pardon, and will render it available in the sight of God ; so it is a condition of such indispensable, because equitable, obligation, that without it God will not forgive us.

And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.

IN this petition, we are taught, that altho' God does never tempt any man to do evil, yet he is sometimes pleased, by very severe trials, to make proof of the faith and constancy of his servants. And that we are moreover in daily danger from our own corrupt nature, and from the seducements of the world and the devil, of being led into such temptations as would be too hard for us, and overwhelm us in the sad evils of guilt and misery, if, by our tempting of God, we should provoke him to withdraw his grace, and leave us to ourselves. Therefore we here pray, that God will be pleased either wholly to keep us from falling into any strong temptation to deadly sin, or, if he sees fit to permit this, that he will not forsake us, but give us strength sufficient for the combat, and safely lead us, through this state of warfare and probation, to that state where we shall be free from all evil and all temptation to it.

For, thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory for ever and ever.

THIS is no petition, but a praising and glorifying of God ; that we may hence learn not only to pray for what we want, but

return

return him love and praise and adoration for what we receive ; and that the end of all may be his glory. And therefore, as we began this prayer with *hallowed be thy Name* ; so when we have begged of God all necessities for our souls and bodies, we then conclude with this form of praise, as it is fit we should in all our prayers.

For thine is the Kingdom, that is, thine is the sovereignty and dominion over all the world ; and therefore hast an infinite right to dispose of all things :

Thine is the Power, that is, thou art omnipotent or able to do all things ; and therefore art most able to grant what we humbly pray for :

Thine is the Glory, that is, to thee we give honour, praise and adoration in these and all our devotions : and if thou, O God, wilt answer our petitions, and grant what we request, to thee shall be returned the praise and glory for all ages.

Amen.

By *Amen*, (or *so be it*) we declare our firm belief that God can grant what we pray for, and our earnest hope and fervent desire that he will do it for the sake of him, in whom *all the promises are yea and Amen*, even the Lord Jesus.

Pious Ejaculations.

For Pardon of Sins.

I Will arise, and will go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ; but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness : according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgment ; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

For I acknowledge my faults : and my sin is ever before me.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

For *Graces or Improvement and Advancement* in a Christian Life.

LORD teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.

Hold thou up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.

Make

Make thou thy servant to delight in that which is good.

Grant that all carnal affections may die in me, and that all things belonging to the spirit may live and grow in me.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

O God of peace, sanctify me wholly, that my whole spirit, soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

For the *Light* of God's Countenance or *Mercy*.

OUT of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord, Lord hear my voice.

O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint.

Lord why abhorrest thou my soul, and hidest thy face from me? O hide not thou thy face from me, nor cast thy servant away in displeasure.

If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it?

Shew thy servant the light of thy countenance.

Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me: and save me for thy mercies sake.

Comfort the soul of thy servant, for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul, from this time forth for evermore. *Amen.*

For *Deliverance* in time of *Trouble*. 2

I Am brought into so much trouble and misery, that I go mourning all the day long.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble, and mine eye is consumed for very heaviness; yea my soul and my body.

Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me: Lord be thou my helper.

Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

For sake me not, O Lord, my God, but haste thee to help me, O Lord, God of my salvation.

Acts of Adoration and Thanksgiving.

PRaise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name.

Thy righteousness, O God, is very high: great things, O Lord, are they that thou hast done: O God! who is like unto thee?

Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength; so will we sing and praise thy power.

Blessing and honour, glory and power, thanksgiving and praise, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. *Amen.*

Short

Short HEADS of SELF-EXAMINATION, *

Especially

Before Receiving the LORD'S SUPPER;

AND

Very *needful* at all times to be perused with diligence by those, who would fully *know*, rightly *confess*, and sincerely *repent* † of their sins.

Of our DUTY to GOD.

FAITH.

DOST thou *believe* there is a God?

—That he made thy soul *immortal*?

—That he will *reward* thee in a *future state* according to thy works?

Dost thou believe in his *holy word*?

—In his *affirmations, commands, promises and threatnings* therein contained?

Hast thou *lived* according to that belief?

HOPE.

DOST thou *hope* in God's mercy?

Hast thou been *presumptuous, or neglected* thy duty to God?

Hast thou *despaired or mistrusted* his mercy?

LOVE.

DOST thou *love* God above all things?

Dost thou *love* God for his own *excellencies*?

—For his *kindness* to us?

Hast thou desired to *please* him?

—To do *his will* in all his *commands and institutions*?

And,

—To *enjoy* him in heaven?

FEAR.

HAST thou *dreaded* the justice of God so as to deter thee from sin?

Hast thou *feared* man more than God; by committing sin to avoid the displeasure or punishment of man?

TRUST.

HAST thou put thy whole *trust* in the power and *promises* of God to deliver thee out of all dangers and *distresses*?

Hast thou sought to *deliver* thyself therefrom by any *sin*?

Hast thou brought thy sins upon thee by *rashness* and *folly*?

Hast thou used *care and prudence* in all thy endeavours?

Hast thou believed *dreams* or *tellers of fortune*?

Hast thou gone to *witches or cunning-men* for *counsel*, or for the *recovery* of things lost?

Hast thou pretended to *foretell* things to come by the *stars, or magic-art*? Or,

Hast thou used *charms, or superstitious words or actions* for the cure of diseases, or any thing else?

Hast

* See page 109, &c.

† See page 132, &c.

Hast thou *depended* on God for the *support* of what thou wantest?

Hast thou been immoderately careful about worldly things?

Hast thou *neglected* to labour, and *expected* that God should support thee in *idleness*?

Hast thou always called upon God for a blessing on thine honest endeavours?

HUMILITY.

HAST thou a *due esteem* for God?

Hast thou with all submission *resigned* thyself to the will of God?

Hast thou considered *thine own corrupt state*, and the *unworthiness* of all thy works?

Hast thou *patiently* borne all *afflictions*, which God permits to come upon thee?

Art thou *thankful* for his fatherly corrections?

Hast thou *amended* thy life under the chastisements of the Lord?

Hast thou obeyed his *commands*, and with *cheerfulness* done thy duty in that state of life, which God has placed thee in?

Hast thou been *contented* in every state and condition of life?

Hast thou preferred God and *eternal happiness* to all the enjoyments of this world?

HONOUR.

HAST thou *honoured* God in all the appointed ways of his *worship*, and *reverently* used those things that bear any relation to him?

—By doing your duty to, and in, his *house*?

—By *honouring* his ministers?
—By providing for their maintenance?

Hast thou committed *sacrilege* by *tricks* or *shifts*; or by *open violence* kept back or refused to pay *tithes* in whole or in part? Or, defrauded the *clergy* of their maintenance?

Hast thou *prophaned* the *Lord's Day* by doing unnecessary business thereon, as *hiring servants*, *paying them wages*, *gathering parish-taxes*; *settling accounts*; and *paying needless visits* to friends and relations?

Hast thou neglected to observe the *Feasts* and *Fasts* of the church set apart for God's honour and service?

Hast thou doubted of the *christian* institution of the *sabbath* on the *first day* of the week instead of the *seventh* day?

Hast thou read and heard the *scriptures* with *respect* and *reverence*, *humility* and *modesty*, and with *earnest prayer* for the understanding of thy duty?

Hast thou believed the *scriptures* to be the *rule of faith*?

Hast thou taught, or procured that those under thy care should be taught their *catechism*?

Dost thou place thy *religion* in going to church, and attending on prayers and hearing sermons, without endeavouring after what you pray for, or minding to *practise* what you hear?

Hast thou endeavoured to *lessen* the *esteem* of the *preacher*, or of his *discourse*?

Hast

Hast thou honoured God in his sacraments?

Hast thou kept thy vows made for thee at baptism?

Hast thou renounced the devil and all his works, viz. all wickedness and vice, and the temptations thereunto?

Hast thou renounced the pomps and vanities of this world, and all it's sinful customs?

Hast thou renounced all the sinful lusts of the flesh, as adultery, fornication, idolatry, hatred, variance, seditions, envyings, drunkenness, murder, revellings, &c.

Hast thou believed all the articles of the christian faith?

Hast thou endeavoured, and prayed for God's grace to keep his commandments?

Hast thou believed that thou art obliged to keep these vows all the days of thy life?

THE ARTICLES OF BELIEF.

HAST thou believed in the Trinity, or that there are three persons in the Godhead?

Hast thou believed that there is but one God?

—That he is the father of all mankind?

—That he is Almighty?

—That he made the world and all things therein out of nothing?

—That his providence continually directs and governs the issues and events of all things?

—That nothing happens but by the determinate counsel of God?

Hast thou submitted thy judgment or reason to the revealed word of God?

Second Article.

Hast thou believed in the truth and excellency of the christian religion?

Hast thou believed in Jesus Christ?

—That he is the promised Messiah?

—That he was a prophet, a priest, and a king?

—That he is our Lord by right of purchase and redemption?

—That christianity is the only way to obtain eternal life?

Third Article.

Hast thou believed that the Son of God was conceived in the virgin Mary's womb, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost?

—That he was born of the virgin Mary, and became a perfect man?

Fourth Article.

Hast thou believed that CHRIST suffered for the sins of man to reconcile him to the justice of God?

—That he was crucified?

—That his blood is the price of our redemption?

—That he did really die; and draws thee to God by his precepts, and example, and grace?

Hast thou endeavoured to obey and imitate him, and pray for his grace?

Hast thou believed that he was buried?

Fifth Article.

Hast thou believed that CHRIST rose from the dead by his own power?

Sixth Article.

Hast thou believed that CHRIST ascended

ascended into heaven in his human nature?

—That he is always interceding for us with God? And

—That there is no other advocate between God and man, but the Man CHRIST JESUS?

Seventh Article.

Hast thou believed that CHRIST will come in his human nature to judge the world at the last day?

—That all judgment is committed to him by God the Father?

—That both angels and men shall then be judged according to their deeds?

—That there shall be degrees of punishments and rewards?

Eighth Article.

Hast thou believed in the HOLY GHOST? And

—That he enlightens our understandings, excites our wills, and strengthens our endeavours for every thing that is good?

Ninth Article.

Hast thou believed that CHRIST founded a church that should spread over all nations, and should never fail?

Tenth Article.

Hast thou rightly considered what is the nature of sin, which sets man at enmity with God?

Hast thou believed that all thy sins truly repented of are forgiven through CHRIST?

Eleventh Article.

Hast thou believed that the same body thou at present hast shall rise again at the last day?

And

—That it shall be judged, re-

warded or punished according to it's deeds together with thy soul?

Twelfth Article.

Hast thou believed that God will reward the good with an eternal life of happiness, and punish the wicked with eternal misery? And

Hast thou endeavoured to live so here, as to obtain eternal happiness hereafter?

Honour due to God in the Lord's Supper.

HAST thou believed that the Lord's Supper is generally necessary to salvation?

—That it was ordained by Christ?

Hast thou prepared thyself to a worthy receiving thereof by examination of conscience, contrition, confession, satisfaction, purpose of amendment, resolutions of obedience, faith, charity, and prayer?

Hast thou at receiving behaved thyself irreverently, without devotion and spiritual affection?

Hast thou after receiving returned immediately to the affairs of this world, or to bad company, sports and pleasures, and forgot or neglected to keep the promises and good resolutions, which thou madest at the time of receiving?

Honour due to God's Name.

HAST thou profaned or taken the name of God in vain?

—By blaspheming, or being the occasion of others blaspheming, by doing or speaking any evil thing of God?

—By swearing falsely or rashly.

—By

- By *perjury*, or taking *unlawful* oaths?
- By swearing in *common conversation*, or in *sight* and *trivial* matters?
- By *curfing*?
- By *careless* and *inconsiderate* vows?

Worship of God's Name.

HAST thou *worshipped* God by *adoration*, *confession*, *petition* for thy *soul* and *body*, and for *pardon* for thy *sins*; by *deprecation* of sin and *punishment*; by *intercession*, *praise* and *thanksgiving* upon all occasions?

Hast thou *omitted* the *publick* prayers in the *church* or thy *family*; or thy *private* devotions, when opportunity served?

Hast thou always prayed for what is *lawful*; and with *faith*, *humility*, *attention*, and *watchfulness*, with a *sense* of God's *majesty* and *goodness*, and of thy own *wants*; with *zeal*, *purity*, and *decent* behaviour of thy body?

Hast thou prayed to *GOD alone*; and condemned the practice

of those who pray to *saints* and *angels*, &c.

Hast thou believed that God will hear thy prayers when offered up to him according to his word?

Hast thou permitted thy *thoughts* to *wander* in time of prayer; or used any *undecent* or *hypocritical* gestures at such times?

Repentance.

HAST thou *repented* of thy *sins* because they *offend* a good and gracious God?

Has thy repentance been *pure*, *constant* and *persevering*, and *immediate*.

Hast thou called thyself to a *daily* account of thy *sins* by *self-examination*?

Hast thou *set apart* any *particular* or *solemn* times for this duty?

Hast thou *put off* this duty to the *hazardous* time of a *death-bed*?

Hast thou *neglected* to *revenge* thy *sins* upon thyself by *fasting* and other acts of *mortification*?

Hast thou not believed that anything but the *blood* of *CHRIST* can *satisfy* for *sin*?

In our Duty to our NEIGHBOUR.

To the KING.

HAST thou *honoured* the *king*?

—By *hiding* his *faults*, and *discouraging* all *vile* and *seditions* discourse and writings against him?

—By *assisting* him in the execution of justice; by paying the *legal* *taxes* and *tribute*, and *praying* for him? And

—By *obeying* all his *godly* commands?

To and of a Magistrate, &c.

HAST thou *honoured*, *reverenced*, and *obeyed* the *civil* magistrate?

Hast thou *faithfully* discharged the trust between the *prince* and the *subject*?

Hast thou made it thy endeavour to be a *terror* to *evil* doers and a *praise* to them that do well?

Hast thou not been more intent upon thy own *private* interest,

rest, than advancing the common good?

Hast thou endeavoured to inform thyself of thy duty, in order to the doing of it, when thou hast been called to the office of constable, church-warden, or any other parish-office?

Hast thou considered how to avoid and shun whatever might occasion strife and dissension, and endeavoured what in thee lies, to become useful and serviceable in thy place and station?

To Pastors.

HAST thou honoured, loved, esteemed, respected, and revered the ministers of God's word and sacraments?

Hast thou helped according to thy ability to maintain them?

Hast thou obeyed them by practising their sound doctrine, and willingly submitting to their ecclesiastical discipline?

Hast thou prayed for them?

Hast thou derided or contemned them?

To Parents.

HAST thou respected and carried thyself civilly to thy parents?

Hast thou loved and obeyed them in all godly commands?

Hast thou asked their advice in the case of thy marriage; or married privately or unadvisedly contrary to their good advice?

Hast thou gone to law with them without manifest reason?

Hast thou neglected or refused to help them in time of need when thou wert able?

To Children.

IF a mother; Hast thou neglected to suckle thy child

without just and necessary cause, that would have been prejudicial to thy health?

Hast thou been careful to bring thy children to baptism?

—To educate them, teach them their duty, and to give them good example?

Hast thou ever persuaded thy child to side with thee against its other parent?

Hast thou endeavoured to provide for the subsistence of thy children in some honest calling agreeable to thy state and condition of life?

Hast thou endeavoured to keep them from idleness?

Hast thou disinherited thy child without a just cause?

To Brethren.

HAST thou affectionately loved thy brother, born of the same flesh?

Hast thou loved all thy spiritual brethren, or fellow-christians?

Hast thou borne with their infirmities; and sympathized with their afflictions?

To a Husband.

HAST thou obeyed thy husband in all his lawful commands?

Art thou adorned with a meek and quiet spirit?

Hast thou been faithful to thy husband's bed and purse?

Hast thou dressed thyself modestly?

Hast thou loved him above all other creatures?

To a Wife.

HAST thou loved thy wife above all others?

Hast thou been faithful to thy marriage-bed?

Hast

Hast thou *maintained* her according to thy ability?

Hast thou *taught* her (if ignorant of) the means of salvation?

Hast thy behaviour to her been *prudent, flexible, and obliging*?

Hast thou *prayed* for her?

Hast thou married within the degrees *forbidden*, or for *undue ends*, as *covetousness, lust, &c.*

To Friends.

HAST thou been *unfaithful* to thy friend?

Hast thou refused or neglected to *assist* him?

Hast thou *prayed* for his conversion?

Hast thou been *constant* to him?

Hast thou *put him in mind* of his open transgressions of the law of God?

To Masters.

HAST thou *obeyed* thy master's lawful commands?

Hast thou *faithfully discharged* thy duty in respect of thy *time and care* of thy master's goods, &c.

Hast thou *purloined*, or kept any part of thy master's goods without his consent to thine own use; Or, Hast thou *suffered* others to *defraud* thy master?

Hast thou *meekly and patiently submitted* to thy master's just rebukes?

Hast thou avoided *idleness, sloth, gaming, company-keeping*, and whatever else tends to the *prejudice* of thy master's business?

Hast thou *repined or murmured* against God for placing thee in a state of *servitude*?

To a Servant.

IF a master; Dost thou *justly* perform thy part of the contract or agreement with thy servant?

Hast thou *admonished* him of his duty to God and man, and *reproved* him for his offences?

Hast thou set him a *good example*?

Hast thou *laid* no more upon him than he is *able* to do?

Hast thou *encouraged* him for his *well-doing*, and *given* him that which is *equal and just*?

Negative Justice.

HAST thou *drawn* any one to *sin*, either by *command, counsel, enticement, or example*?

Hast thou *affrighted* any one from *godliness* by *deriding* him for the profession of it?

Hast thou endeavoured to *reform* or *bring* those to *repentance* whom thou hast drawn to sin?

Murder.

HAST thou *openly or secretly* contrived the death, or taken away the life of another?

Hast thou made women *miscarry*?

Hast thou *enticed* to, or *accompanied* others in such *excess* of *eating or drinking* as to be the cause of their death?

Hast thou stirred men up to *quarreling and fighting*, or been the *cause or instrument* of such *disension* between others, as hath ended in murder?

Hast thou by *false accusation, poison, or otherwise*, taken away thy neighbour's life?

If a woman; Hast thou taken any thing to prevent *conception*, or to *cause* miscarriage; or hast thou taken away the

life of thy child either *before* or *after* birth to cover thy shame?

Duelling.

HAST thou given or accepted a challenge to fight?

Murder in Thought and Words.

HAST thou kept thy thoughts from *hatred*, desire of *revenge*, and compassing the death of another?

Hast thou *threatened* the death of thy neighbour, or encouraged others by thy words to procure or seek it?

Maiming, &c.

HAST thou wilfully and maliciously *dismembered*, *maimed* or *disfigured* thy neighbour's person?

Hast thou made all the *satisfaction* in thy power to those thou hast *maimed*?

Hast thou *wounded*, *beat*, or otherwise *injured* thy neighbour's body?

Self-murder.

HAST thou ever harboured any thoughts of taking away thy own life: Or wilfully run thy life into danger: Or, desired any one to kill thee?

If a prisoner under condemnation: Hast thou wished or endeavoured to prevent thy publick execution, by privately destroying thyself?

Adultery.

HAST thou coveted thy neighbour's wife, or enticed her to defile her marriage-bed?

Theft.

HAST thou taken pleasure in *damaging* or *destroying* thy neighbour's goods?

Hast thou looked upon them with a covetous eye?

Hast thou taken them from him by *violence* or *fraud*?

Hast thou *coveted* thy neighbour's servant, or used any acts to seduce him from his master's service?

Hast thou endeavoured to deprive or dispossess thy neighbour from any employment, business, or habitation, to gain any advantage to thyself, or to satisfy thy revenge upon the ruin of thy neighbour?

Hast thou paid thy just debts?

Hast thou no intention to pay at the time of borrowing?

Hast thou borrowed upon bad securities?

Hast thou put off thy payments when due, and obliged thy creditors to force thee by law?

Hast thou endeavoured to defraud them by *protections*, or any other frauds?

Hast thou discharged those bonds thou hast given for others?

Hast thou paid what thou promisedst?

Stealing.

HAST thou robbed on the highways; stolen cattle, poultry, &c. broken into houses, broken open locks, &c. or privately pilfered any thing?

Breach of Trust.

HAST thou been an arbitrator in a cause, and given judgment against thy conscience?

Hast thou been an executor to a will; and neglected or falsified thy trust?

Hast thou been a guardian to children, &c. and robbed or permitted others to injure them?

Hast thou been a factor, and endeavoured to impose upon, or

or refused to give a just account to those that employ-
ed thee?

Hast thou been an assignee, and
concealed or delayed to dis-
tribute to every one his just
part of the debtor's effects?

Hast thou been the keeper of a
pledge, and refused to restore
it upon lawful terms?

Hast thou been a publick asses-
sor for taxes of any sort, and
hast thou conscientiously with-
out favour or affection asses-
sed every one according to
their due?

Hast thou been a parish officer,
and taken care not to im-
bezzle the money commit-
ted to thy trust, in feastings,
&c. and to relieve the poor
according to the allowance
of the parish?

Hast thou been a trustee for the
poor in any charitable gifts?
if so, a breach of thy trust is
sacrilege,

Traffic or Bargaining.

HAST thou contrived to de-
ceive the buyer or seller by
concealing the faults of thy
goods?

Hast thou endeavoured to im-
pose upon any one's ignorance?

Or,

—To take advantage of their
necessities? Or,

—By unjust weights and mea-
sures? Or,

—By uttering bad money?

If thou hast sinned in any of
these particulars, hast thou
endeavoured to make restitu-
tion?

Credit or Reputation.

HAST thou endeavoured to
ruin thy neighbour's credit
by false reports?

—By censoriousness?

—By false witness?

—By publick slanders?

—By whispering?

—By encouraging ewe-droppers,
talebearers, and slanderers?

—By publishing hearsays, which
we cannot prove to be true?

—By upbraiding him with our
kindnesses?

—By reproaching him with his
faults repented of?

—By scoffing and despising our
neighbour for infirmities, de-
formities, or weaknesses; and
for calamities and sins?

—By encouraging others so to
do?

Hast thou endeavoured to re-
store that good name which
thou hast blasted?

Hast thou any malicious desire
against thy neighbour; or
taken any pleasure in his mis-
fortune?

Positive justice.

HAST thou spoken truth to all
men?

Hast thou promised nothing out
of thy power?

Hast thou avoided flattery?

Hast thou been guilty of lying
or equivocation, either for
profit or pleasure?

Hast thou been courteous and
meek to all men?

Hast thou refrained brawling?

Hast thou shewn due respect to
men of extraordinary gifts?

Envy and Detraction.

HAST thou envied or endea-
voured to detract from or
lessen thy neighbour's quali-
fications?

Hast thou secretly wished death
or hurt to thy neighbour?

Hast thou shewn due respect to
men of rank and quality; to
the

the rich ; to those in want
and to the poor ?

Gratitude.

HAST thou been grateful to
thy benefactors ?

Charity or Love to our Neighbour.

HAST thou been affectionately
desirous of the salvation
of all men ?

Hast thou wished them all
health and welfare ?

Hast thou contemned, upbraided,
or reproached any one for natural
blemishes ?

Hast thou grudged or repined at
thy neighbour's good ?

Hast thou vilified or disdained
thy neighbour ?

Hast thou judged rashly of his
words or actions ?

Hast thou spoken him fair, and
injured him privately ?

Hast thou sought to advance
thine own interest by the ruin
of thy neighbour ?

Hast thou loved or forgiven
those thine enemies, who have
offended thee ?

Hast thou endeavoured to comfort
and refresh thy sorrowful
neighbour ?

Hast thou endeavoured to support
him in despair ; and to
reclaim him from his evil
course of life ?

Hast thou, according to thy ability,
given meat to the hungry,
drink to the thirsty,
cloaths to the naked, and
lodging to the stranger ?

Hast thou visited the sick and
those that are in prison ?

When obliged ; Hast thou prosecuted
an offender without
rage or malice ?

Hast thou never permitted thy
rich neighbour to suffer loss,

when in thy power to prevent
it ?

Hast thou given alms according
to thy ability, and cheerfully,
seasonably, and prudently ?

Hast thou strove to get riches
by unjust means, to give to
the poor ; or given them the
substance due to thy creditors ?

Charity to our Neighbour's Credit or Reputation.

HAST thou been ready to
vindicate the innocence of
thy neighbour when falsely
accused ?

Hast thou grounded thy dislike
of thy neighbour upon bare
suspicions and hear-say ?

Hast thou fancied the worst designs,
and put the worst interpretation
upon his words
and actions ?

Hast thou dwelt upon an injury
received ; and hearkened to
idle tales ?

Hast thou been ready to accept
of thy neighbour's proposals
of reconciliation ?

Hast thou been ready to do all
that for thy neighbour,
which, were our case his, and
his ours, we should in reason
and good conscience expect
and be glad to have done to
ourselves ?

Hast thou done good to thy
neighbour without indirectly
seeking thy own profit or
pleasure ?

Hast thou treated thy superiors
with cheerful submission ?

—Thy benefactors with gratitude ?

—Thy equals with good nature,
and readiness to do all offices
of kindness ?

—Thy

—Thy *inferiors* with *gentleness*, *moderation*, and *charity*?

Hast thou taken *all* opportunities to do them *all* the good in thy power?

Hast thou set aside *all self-love*, and striven to please thy neighbour, for *his good to edification*?

Hast thou prayed to God to bless thee with a *charitable*, *meek*, and *peaceable* temper?

Peace-making.

HAST thou reported any thing *false* of thy neighbour?

Hast thou *listened* to hear what thy neighbour said to another person, either through *curiosity*, *malice*, or *envy*, to spread abroad what thou so *heardest*, to his *prejudice*, or

to create a *dispute*, *variance*, or *contention*?

Hast thou lived a *peaceable*, or *quiet* life, never taking part in other men's quarrels, otherwise than to appease them?

Going to Law.

HAST thou gone to law or sued thy neighbour for *trifles*; or some *unguarded* or *injurious* words, which no ways affect thy reputation, and he is willing to *revoke*?

Hast thou been sure that thou wentest to law only to recover or maintain thy *just right*?

Hast thou sued thy neighbour out of *revenge*?

Of our Duty towards OURSELVES.

Sobriety.

HAST thou sought after a *sound* and *firm* mind?

Hast thou striven to govern and direct thy *inferior appetites* to good and *virtuous* purposes?

Hast thou *searched* and *regulated* both thy *soul* and *body* in thy *personal* and *private* capacity?

Hast thou bent thy *thoughts* to what is good?

Hast thou kept thy *heart* in a good disposition to *virtue*?

Hast thou made *religion* thy *greatest care*?

Hast thou avoided *idleness* and *bad company*?

Hast thou watched over and checked the *first motions* to *evil*?

Hast thou *always* lived under a constant sense of God's *presence* and *inspection*?

Humility.

HAST thou *abhorred* all *flattering* expressions and behaviour that covers an *hypocritical* and *proud* heart?

Hast thou *sincerely* *humbled* thyself before God and man, in a deep sense of thine own *corruption* and *subordination*?

Hast thou obeyed the *civil magistrate* willingly in all things *just* and *lawful*?

Hast thou *despised* their *persons*, or *exposed* their *weaknesses*, or *insulted* over their *infirmities*?

Hast thou been *willing* and *desirous* to be *instructed* by thy *superiors* in *natural abilities*?

Hast thou *envied* them, or *repined* at the *advantages* God has given them above thyself?

Hast thou *grieved* at or *envied* others for their *advancement* on

on account of their *religious* improvements ?

Hast thou been *civil, affable, courteous, and modest* to, and among thy *equals* ?

Hast thou *repined* or *murmured* to see them *preferred* before thee ?

Hast thou been willing for *peace-sake* to *submit* to things *indifferent* ?

Hast thou *assumed* no more *authority* over thy *inferiors* than is *consistent* with thy *station*, and *necessary* to preserve the *regularity* and *good order* of the world ?

Hast thou been *willing* to *assist* 'em in their *necessities*, and to make their condition as *supportable* and *easy* as may be ?

Hast thou thought thyself *too great* to *instruct* or to *procure* the *instruction* of those that are *poor* and *ignorant* ?

Hast thou been *sensible* of thine *own* many *infirmities* and *sin*s ?

Hast thou striven to *influence* men towards *religion* rather by *meekness* than by *power* ?

Hast thou *avoided* the *applause* of men by *outward* shew of *piety* ?

Hast thou *judged* or *despised* those that *differ* from thee in *religion* ?

Hast thou taken care to give *no offence* to the *enemies* of thy *holy religion* ?

Hast thou imposed *needless difficulties* on those under thy *power* ?

Hast thou used great *gentleness* to those that have *offended* thee ?

Self-Conceit.

HAST thou been *puffed up* above measure on any account whatever ?

Hast thou striven to be *wise* above what is *revealed* in God's word ?

Hast thou ventured to *publish* thine *own inventions* in matters of *pure revelation* ?

Hast thou been *positive* in thy opinion concerning *them* ?

Hast thou *ascribed* all thy *knowledge* to the *blessing* of God ?

Hast thou been *impatient* of *opposition* ?

Hast thou *disdained* counsel ?

Hast thou *scorned* instruction and rebuke, or taken affront at every one that yields not to thy opinion ?

Pride.

HAST thou *presumed* so much on thyself, as to set up for a *director, pattern, or law-giver* to every body else ?

Hast thou *valued* thyself on the *goods of nature* ; or because thou art *more beautiful, strong, witty, &c.* than others ? Or,

—On the *goods of fortune* ; because thou art *more wealthy, honourable, &c.* Or,

—On the *goods of grace* ; because God hath *blessed* thee with *greater gifts* or *virtues* than others ?

Vain glory.

HAST thou been *resolved* to *court* the *praise* of man at all adventures, by committing any sin in *fashion* ?

Hast thou been *too much exalted* in thy heart at the *just praises* of thy *virtues* ?

Meekness.

Meekness.

HAST thou been *calm, quiet,* and *cheerful* under God's appointments, and *absolutely* resigned to his providence ?
 Hast thou been *angry* without a cause ?
 Hast thou *judged* by *appearances* only ?
 Hast thou *given way* to *suspicions*, not supported by evidence ?
 Hast thou put the *best* construction on all *words* and *actions* ?
 Hast thou checked *all* *resentment*, till thou hast duly considered the grounds of it ?
 Hast thou relented *higher* than the *merit* of the offence given ?
 Hast thou *rendered* railing for railing ?
 Hast thou used *rough* methods to right thyself from *considerable* injuries ?
 Hast thou tried *argument* before *punishment*, and *conference* before *law* ?
 Hast thou used *private* admonition before thou punishedst thy neighbour openly ?
 Hast thou *sought* *justice*, and *punished* without *hatred*, and merely with a view to reach those ends which are lawful and commendable ?
 Hast thou been *always* ready to be reconciled upon just and equitable conditions ?
 Hast thou been ready to *help* and *pray* for thy greatest enemies ?
 Hast thou been *full* of thy own *abilities*, and *overbearing* in company ?
 Hast thou *behaved* with *civility* to all men in their proper relations ?

Consideration.

HAST thou first *considered* thy words and actions *well* before thou fixedst thy resolutions ?
 Hast thou *presumed* on thine own *works* and *merit* ; or on a bare *historical* faith in Christ for salvation ?
 Hast thou presumed to think thyself *elect* or *decreed* to salvation without strict *obedience* to, and *faith* in, the *gospel* of Christ ?
 Hast thou been *careless* and *negligent* in thy pursuit of eternal life ?
 Hast thou lived *securely* in a *sinful* state ?
 Hast thou considered the consequences of thy *actions* both before and after thou didst them ?
 — Whether they be *hurtful* to thyself or neighbour ? Or,
 — Whether they be according to the *rules* of the *gospel* ?
 Hast thou ever *laid down* to *sleep* before thou hast *considered* thine own estate, *repented* of thy sins, and *resolved* to lead a new life ?

Contentedness.

HAST thou been *content* with that state and circumstance of life, in which God's providence has placed thee ?
 Hast thou *murmured* or *repined* at the afflictions thou hast met with ?
 Hast thou received God's corrections with *submission* of *praise* ?
 Hast thou any *ambition* to strive after unlawful dominion or power, large possessions, and high living ?

Hast

Hast thou *distrusted* the promises of God?

Hast thou *judged* of God's love or hatred to any one by *outward* circumstances?

Hast thou been so *covetous* as to increase thy substance by *fraud* and *deceit*? Or,

—By engaging in more affairs than thou couldst manage without anxiety, discontent, and neglect of religious duties?

Hast thou endeavoured the best thou couldst, and left the event to God?

Hast thou *grieved immoderately* at the loss of husband, wife, child, parent, friend, &c.

Watchfulness.

HAST thou been always mindful to *resist* the first beginnings of evil, and approaches of the spiritual enemy?

Hast thou striven to *work out* thy salvation with fear and trembling?

Industry.

HAST thou employed thy *reason, understanding* and *memory* to promote the glory of God, thy neighbour's good, and thine own salvation?

Hast thou been *idle, slothful, intemperate, brutish* or *profane*?

Hast thou *preferred* thy reason to God's revelation? Or,

—Loaded thy memory with *wicked thoughts, or romances, and idle tales*?

Hast thou done *thy duty* in that *state of life* God has placed thee in?

Hast thou been ready to give good advice; to *instruct* the ignorant; and to *resolve* the

scruples of those that apply to thee?

Hast thou taken care to bring thy children up to some *bonest* employ; and at all times to keep them out of idleness?

Art thou a labourer or servant; and dost loiter away thy time, for which thou dost receive wages?

Hast thou *neglected* thy *household affairs*, thy family, children, or employment, without which thou canst not live, according to thy station, under a pretence of more pure religion?

Hast thou endeavoured to *improve* all sorts of piety and virtue, by fixing thy mind upon heaven, as thy end; by endeavouring to grow in grace; taking every opportunity of doing good both to the souls and bodies of thy neighbours; keeping guard on thy passions, and being ready to obey the checks of conscience?

Hast thou been drawn from thy duty by temptation?

Hast thou laid thy sins to the charge of God or of the devil?

Hast thou begged God's grace to strengthen thee and resisted the devil?

Chastity or Purity.

HAST thou committed *adultery, or fornication, or incest*?

Hast thou been careful to abstain from all *unnatural* and *unlawful* pleasures of sense in thyself and others; and hast thou been *moderate* in the use of such as are lawful and allowed by the *christian* religion?

Hast

Hast thou *delighted* in, or used *wanton* or *lascivious* words, *looks* or *gestures*, *lewd* company, *indecent* balls, or *revelings*?

Hast thou read *dishonest* books, or *unchaste* songs; or looked on *immodest* pictures?

Hast thou taken any carnal pleasure with thy *hands*, or *exposed* any part of thy body, to *excite* others to lust? Or,

Hast thou endeavoured to *excite* lust by *eating* or *drinking* any thing for that end?

Hast thou been careful to *stifle* and *suppress* all beginnings of those sins in thy *thoughts*, and to *apply* thy mind to good objects?

Hast thou made use of words of a *double meaning*, to create *unchaste thoughts* in others?

Hast thou *repeated* what thou hast heard, in such manner as to *injure* christian *modesty*?

Hast thou carefully avoided all *outward* temptations to this sin?

Hast thou *prayed* to God *frequently* to preserve thee from this sin; knowing that the perfection and happiness of a reasonable creature does not consist in sensual enjoyments, but in those which are spiritual?

Temperance.

HAST thou never *eaten* nor *drank* beyond what God and nature has intended for the *being* and *well-being* of thy life?

Hast thou *eaten* or *drank* only to *gratify* thy taste, or to *excite* lust?

Hast thou lived at thy table *above* thine ability, or indulged thyself with *niceties* and *luxury*?

Hast thou *avoided* whatever thou findest *prejudicial* to thy *health*, or to make thy body *heavy* and *incapable* of performing thy duty?

Hast thou *squandered* away thine own or creditors substance with *banquetting*, *feasting* or *drunkenness*, and *company-keeping*?

Hast thou *delighted* in *drunken* companions?

Time.

HOW hast thou *employed* thy *time*?

Hast thou *applied* all the *time* thou couldst reserve from the necessities of nature, to the glory of God, and thy own and neighbour's good?

Hast thou assigned a *proper* season to all thy actions; and so much time only as may be *necessary* for them.

Sleep.

HAST thou *delighted* too much in thy bed; or slept when thou wert well refreshed and oughtest to arise to thy *work* or *devotions*?

Hast thou, when thou laidest thyself down to rest, *recommended* thy soul to God; and *repented* of thy sins past?

Hast thou, when thou didst rise up from sleep, *thanked* God for thy comfortable *refreshment*, and his *protection* and *preservation* of thee?

Hast thou been *slothful*?

Recreations.

HAST thou set thy affections too much upon *play*?

Hast thou *gamed* thyself into a *passion*?

Hast thou *gamed* too long, or come too often to thy *recreations*?

H h

Hast

Haſt thou preferred thy *paſtimes* to thy buſineſs, to the detriment thereof?

Haſt thou made a trade of gaming?

Haſt thou *lyed, cheated, deceived, ſworn* or quarrelled at thy recreations?

Haſt thou played for more money than thou wert able to loſe without *diſcompoſure* of temper, or hurt to thy family or eſtate?

Have thy recreations been *ſhort*, uſed for reſreſhment only, and always yielding to thy neceſſary duties?

Apparel.

HAſT thou been modeſt in thy apparel?

Haſt thou laid more out in apparel than thy circumſtances can allow?

Haſt thou dreſſed with a view to *tempt* others to ſin, either in the ſame exceſs, or in the luſts of the fleſh?

Haſt thou *followed the faſhions*, and dreſſed thyſelf only to ſet off thy beauty, and to deceive the world into a falſe opinion of thy *greatneſs* and *honour*?

Haſt thou taken up *ſo much time* in dreſſing thyſelf, or ſhewing thyſelf to company, or in preparing thy ſuperfluous cloaths, as to neglect the care of thy ſoul?

Haſt thou regarded the *faſhions* of dreſs ſo as to prejudice thy health thereby?

Haſt thou been ſo *covetous* as to deny thyſelf convenient apparel ſuitable to thy ſtation and circumſtances?

Haſt thou for any *wicked purpoſes* put on the dreſs of the *other ſex*?

Haſt thou been *ſatisfied* with mean and plain apparel, when it was not in thy power to get better with a good conſcience?

Fortitude or Patience.

HAſT thou been always *calm* and *composed*, and *ſteady* in thy duty to God under *afflictions*, or in *delay* of thy expectations?

Haſt thou permitted *reaſon* and *grace* to guide thee in all thy ways?

Haſt thou concluded that God is *angry* with thee, when thou haſt fallen into divers temptations and afflictions?

Haſt thou *retired*, *changed* the diſcourſe, or remained *ſilent*, when anger began to boil?

Haſt thou *deſpiſed* little trifles of diſcontent?

Self-Denial.

Wouldſt thou rather loſe the *whole world*, and *life* itſelf, than *offend* God?

Haſt thou denied thy *innocent* appetites, when they hindered the practice of mortification?

Zeal.

HAſT thou done *all* in thy power to keep a conſcience *void* of offence?

Haſt thou endeavoured, by a *good example*, and *admonition*, and *authority*, to promote virtue, and to *ſuppreſs* vice?

Haſt thou carefully *distinguished* between the *glory* of God and ſatisfying thine own or another's *paſſion* or *inclination*?

Haſt thou *perſecuted* for religion with a *furioſus ſpirit*?

Haſt thou been always *perſuaded* that what you contended for

- | | |
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| <p>for was certainly and considerably good; and what you opposed was certainly and considerably bad?</p> <p>Hast thou been more concerned for the <i>externals</i> of religion, than for <i>solid</i> and <i>real</i> goodness?</p> <p>Hast thou been guilty of any <i>lye</i>, <i>equivocation</i>, or <i>fraud</i>, or <i>violence</i>, or <i>oppression</i>, &c. to bring about, as thou supposedst, a good end?</p> <p>Has thy <i>zeal</i> caused any one to</p> | <p><i>fall</i>, or <i>separate</i> from, or to keep out of the <i>Christian church</i>?</p> <p>Hast thou <i>persecuted</i> without <i>meekness</i> and <i>charity</i>?</p> <p>Hast thou in <i>religious disputes</i> avoided all <i>reproachful</i> and <i>bitter reflections</i>; all <i>false reasonings</i>, and <i>misapplication</i> of scripture?</p> <p>Art thou <i>stedfast</i> in thy <i>holy religion</i>, and <i>charitable</i> to those that <i>dissent</i> from thee?</p> |
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A Prayer for sincere Repentance.

A Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit; that I may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

Prayers for the Holy Communion.

The Reader, that would be satisfied concerning the Nature, Design and End of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is referred to Sunday VI. Sect. I, II, III, and IV. in this Book.

A Prayer for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper, to be said immediately after Sermon.

I Know, O Lord, that the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith I do receive this holy sacrament, (for then I spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood; then I dwell in Christ, and Christ in me; then I am one with Christ, and Christ with me;) Grant therefore, good Lord, that I and every one of us now approaching thereunto, may repent us truly for our sins past, have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour, that we may amend our lives, and be in perfect charity with all men; and so become meet partakers of those holy mysteries. *Amen.*

A Prayer when we offer our Alms.

O Merciful Lord, by whose goodness and providence I am both willing and enabled to relieve the necessities of my poor brethren! I beseech thee to accept of this testimony of my love and gratitude, and to make me truly thankful for all those happy opportunities thou givest me of doing good, in the name of that perfect pattern of all goodness, thy Son Jesus Christ, my only Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer immediately after the Bread and Wine are consecrated.

Gracious Lord, who so lovedst the world, that thou gavest thine only begotten Son to humble himself to the death of the cross, that I might be redeemed from a state of sin and misery; who (to the end that all men should always remember his exceeding great love in dying for us, and the innumerable benefits, which by his precious blood-shedding he has obtained to us) did institute and ordain such holy mysteries as pledges of his love, and for a continual remembrance of his death, to our great and endless comfort: I humbly implore, that the power of it may strengthen my weakness against all temptations; that the wisdom of it may cure my ignorance; and that the purity of this oblation of himself once offered may sanctify me throughout in body, soul and spirit; and this I beg for the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer before receiving the consecrated Bread.

Grant me, I beseech thee, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that my sinful body may be made clean by his body, and my soul washed through his most precious blood, and that I may evermore dwell in him, and he in me. *Amen.*

As the Priest comes to give you the Bread, say,

LET thy body, I beseech thee, O Lord Jesu Christ, which was given for me, preserve my body and soul unto everlasting life; and grant that I may take and eat this in remembrance that thou hast died for me, and feed on thee in my heart by faith with thanksgiving. *Amen.*

As the Minister comes to give you the Cup, say,

LET thy blood, I beseech thee, O Lord Jesu Christ, which was shed for me, preserve my body and soul unto everlasting life; and grant that I may drink this in remembrance that thy blood was shed for me, and be thankful. *Amen.*

After receiving the consecrated Bread and Wine, say,

GLORY be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: for seeing now, O gracious Lord! that I, who am but dust and ashes, have been refreshed with the body and blood of thy dear Son, I will magnify thy holy name; and as long as I have any being, I will sing praises unto my God. O let not these feet which have approached thine altar, ever more walk in the ways of the wicked: let not these hands, that have received the bread and the cup, which came down from heaven, be ever defiled with injustice, or any kind of impiety, but grant that they may evermore be washed in innocency: let these eyes be chaste, that have beheld the God of purity: let that mouth be clean, that has spiritually received the body and blood of Christ; and let that soul be raised above this world, that has been thus refreshed with the divine presence of the same thy Son Jesus Christ my Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Prayer when retired from the Lord's Table.

O Lord, I give thee most humble and hearty thanks, that thou hast been pleased to admit me now to renew my baptismal covenant with thee, in this holy sacrament; and that thou hast vouchsafed to feed me with the spiritual nourishment of the body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ; not for any merits of my own, but for the sake of thy infinite goodness and mercy towards sinful man. Therefore I beseech thee, grant that this holy sacrament may never turn to my judgment and condemnation, but that it may be health and recovery under all my weaknesses and infirmities; safety and defence against all the attacks of my spiritual enemies; vigour and strength to all my holy purposes and resolutions; comfort and support under all the afflictions and calamities of life; assistance and direction under all difficulties and doubts; courage and constancy under all dangers and persecutions, especially in times of sickness, and at the hour of death; and finally, that it may procure for me pardon and forgiveness in this life, mercy and favour at the day of judgment, and a never-fading crown of glory in thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ my Redeemer. *Amen.*

Prayers to be used by Sick Persons.

The Reader, who would understand how to support himself under, and improve such Sickness, as the Lord shall please to visit him with, is referred to Sunday VII. Sect. VI. and Sunday XVII.

A Prayer in Sickness.

O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; behold me thy poor servant, upon whom thou hast been pleased to lay thine afflicting hand; sanctify, I beseech thee, this thy fatherly correction to me, and grant that I may receive it with all the patience and submission becoming a child of God, neither murmuring nor repining under any dispensations of thy providence; but looking on all my afflictions as the means to wean me from the world, to bring me nearer to thyself, and to purge away all that drops and defilement which my soul has contracted in this sinful world. O merciful Father, let not my sins provoke thee to turn away thy face from me, while I seek unto thee in this time of my trouble; but for the merits and intercession of thy beloved Son, pardon all my sins; and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Oh! give me strength, resolution and patience to bear all my pain, weaknesses, and infirmities; strengthen my faith, enlarge my hopes, increase my charity, and perfect my repentance, that I may be delivered from the fear of death. Make thou my bed in my sickness, and lay not more upon me, than thou wilt enable me to bear; give a blessing to the means that shall be used for my recovery; and if it be thy good pleasure, restore me to my former health, that I may lead the rest of my life in thy fear and to thy glory: but if thou hast determined that this sickness shall be unto death; grant, O merciful Father, that the more the outward man decayeth, so much the more I may find the inner man strengthened, and renewed with thy grace and Holy Spirit; and give me grace so to take this thy visitation, that after this painful life ended, I may dwell with thee in life everlasting, thro' the merits of Jesus Christ, my dear and only Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer on sending for the Physician.

Almighty God, forasmuch as thou hast ordained the physician, for the benefit of those who languish under any bodily distemper, I have resolved to try his skill, in order to the same, yet my chief hope is in thee: O be thou my help; for without thee, vain is the help of man and all his skill. Therefore, I beseech thee, direct thy servant to what may be proper for me, and let thy blessing accompany his prescriptions, and give success thereto. For though the most efficacious methods of cure are nothing of themselves, yet if thou speakest the word, thy servant shall be healed; it is thou that art the great physician, who alone canst effectually remove all my maladies: and all other

ther helps are but instruments in thy hands, that work according to thy good pleasure: therefore be thou with me, to guide and assist, to bless and prosper them, to thine own glory, and to the welfare of me thine unworthy servant, who here most humbly sue to thee for pity, thro' Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used on taking Physick.

GIVE thy blessing, O Lord, to the means now used for my recovery; for without thee all our endeavours are but vain, and (if it be thy blessed will) make them so effectual for that end, that I may live to promote thy glory, and to make a better preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used on want of Sleep.

ALmighty God, I seek sleep to ease my pains, and to recruit my spirits, but I find it not; consider my weariness, which calls aloud for rest, and my weakness, which greatly needs refreshment, and let my wearied eyes at length lay hold thereof. O grant me that comfort, that whilst thou keepest me awake, I may be able to commune with my own heart, and search out my spirit; let me remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches; and let the consideration of thy tender mercies be my comfort, till thy goodness sees fit to give sleep to my eyes, and refreshment to my sorrows, through the merits of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be used when labouring under bodily Pain.

ALmighty God, who art a present help in time of trouble: I most earnestly beseech thee, if it be thy blessed will, to ease my pain, and comfort me in this time of my affliction. Not but I acknowledge the justice of thy dealings towards me, and that I have deserved much greater pains than I now endure; therefore grant me patience, that with a meek and quiet submission to thy will, I may wait till thou seekest fit to deliver me from my distress. And whatever evils and sorrows I may feel in my body, let me still love thee, and believe thee to be a kind and merciful Father, even whilst thou art smiting and correcting me for my transgressions. To which end, O Lord, be pleased, in thy great mercy, to strengthen and support me, and lay not more upon me than thou wilt enable me to bear by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit; and sanctify this affliction to me, that it may produce in me the fruits of a true and lively faith, and sincere repentance of all my sins: all which I beg at the throne of thy mercy, through the merits and in the name of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, my Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a sick Child.

ALmighty God, and merciful Father, to whom alone belong the issues of life and death; I fly unto thee for succour in behalf of this child here lying under thy hand in great weakness of body. Look graciously upon it, O Lord; ease it, I beseech thee, of
it's

it's pains, and pity it in extremity. We know, O Lord, that if thou wilt, thou canst raise it up, and grant it a longer continuance in this life. O raise it up again (if it may please thee) to grow in years and stature, in wisdom and thy fear, and thereby to comfort it's parents, and to glorify thee. I believe, O God, that thou knowest best what is fit for it and me, and that thou wilt do what is best for both; and therefore I humbly resign it's life to thee; beseeching thee to have mercy on us. But whether it lives or dies, let it be thine; and either preserve it to be thy true and faithful servant here on earth, or take it into those heavenly habitations, where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual rest and felicity. Grant this, O Lord, for thy mercies sake, in the same thy Son my Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving after Recovery from sickness.

A Lmighty God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, I thine unworthy servant, whom thou hast raised from a dangerous sickness, do now present myself before thee, acknowledging it to be owing to thy goodness alone, that I am now alive, and have once more an opportunity of offering up my prayers and praises unto thee; because, altho' thou hast chastened me and corrected me, yet thou hast not given me over unto death. Therefore enable me to retain a thankful remembrance of this goodness of thine, and give me power to put it in force, that I may always have my own serious purposes of better obedience; a constant tender sense of the great obligations I lie under, of serving thee faithfully all my days; a greater and more fervent zeal to promote thy glory and the good of my brethren; to study to please thee better than ever I have yet done; and to devote the remainder of that life which thou hast given me, to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk in the service of thee, my God, who art my defender and deliverer. And grant, O merciful Father, thro' the merits, and for the sake of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, that when my accounts are examined at the last day, I may be found worthy to enter into the joy of my Lord: To whom with thee and the ever-blessed Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, by me, and every creature, all thanksgiving and praise, honour, glory, power, and dominion, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer against the Fear of Death.

MOST gracious God, since I am hastening on to the end of my life; let all my sins be done away by thy mercy, and my faith and repentance thro' the merits of Christ. Take from me all guilt, remove all fear, and give me patience during the rest of my life, that I may always stand ready to give a good account of my life unto thee; and that I may fight the good fight of faith with constancy and perseverance, and finish my course with joy, and never sleep in sin, nor lie down in sorrow and misery. Since
the

the sentence of death is passed upon me, strip my soul of all fleshly affections, before it leaves my body; and dispose it to be of like mind and disposition with the holy angels, and beatified spirits; neither let me forget, that as this is like to be the last trial, which thou wilt afford me, of renouncing my own will and resigning myself to thine, and of shewing forth devotion of spirit, and all holy obedience, and patience and faith, and humble confidence in thee; make me therefore watch for all opportunities of exercising the same, and do them diligently, as my last labour for immortality, and for securing thy everlasting mercy, thro' the merits of Jesus Christ, who died for me and all mankind. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Assistance at the Hour of Death.

O Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, my only help in time of need; look graciously upon me, O Lord, and the more the outward man decayeth, strengthen me, I beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy grace and Holy Spirit in the inner man. Give me unfeigned repentance for all the errors of my life past, and stedfast faith in thy Son Jesus, that my sins may be done away by thy mercy, and my pardon sealed in heaven, before I go hence and be no more seen. I know, O Lord, that there is no work impossible with thee, and that if thou wilt, thou canst even yet raise me up, and grant me a longer continuance in this life. Yet, forasmuch as in all appearance the time of my departure draweth near, so fit and prepare me, I beseech thee, against the hour of death, that after my departure hence in peace, and in thy favour, my soul may be received into thine everlasting kingdom, thro' the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thine only Son, my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Help to the Reading of the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE Holy Scriptures being of divine authority, and excellently fitted to afford all the assistance we can need in our way to heaven, all christians are to have recourse to those sacred books, as to the fountain from whence they are to be plentifully stored with knowledge. Wherefore the following directions are designed to promote plenty of scriptural knowledge; and may the blessing of God make them effectual to that excellent purpose: To which End,

Let me recommend particularly these which follow.

The OLD TESTAMENT.

In the Book of GENESIS.

In the three *first* chapters you have the history of the creation, and of the fall of man, and the promises of mercy through Christ. In the 6th to the 9th, you may read the history of the flood; and of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the

18th and 19th chapters ; and of the sufferings and advancement of Joseph, in the 37th chapter, to the end of the book.

In the Book of EXODUS.

From the 3d to the 13th chapter, read the history of the sufferings and deliverance of the Israelites ; as also of the law, of the ten commandments, and of the terrible manner in which it was published in the 19th, 20th, 24th, 31st, to the 35th chapter of the same book.

In the Book of LEVITICUS.

Read, in the 24th chapter, the sin and punishment of Shelomith's son for blasphemy.

In the Book of NUMBERS.

The seditious and rebellious subject may read his punishment, in the 16th chapter.

In the Book of DEUTERONOMY.

In the 5th, 27th, 28th, and 29th chapters, you will find the greatest discouragements from sin, and a great variety of motives to a holy life.

In the *first* Book of SAMUEL.

In the 17th chapter you have a relation of the combat of David with Goliath, and the particulars which concern it ; which are fit to excite to Faith, and a pious confidence in God our Saviour.

In the *first* Book of KINGS.

Here Solomon's choice of wisdom offers itself to you in the 3d chapter ; and in the 13th, 17th, and 18th chapters, you have several illustrious proofs of God's providential care of his faithful servants in time of danger.

In the *first* Book of CHRONICLES.

You may read in the 28th chapter, particularly at the 9th verse, king David's charge before his death, to his son king Solomon ; " Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him " with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, &c.

In the *second* Book of CHRONICLES.

You have the pious life of Josiah, and his sorrowful death, in the 34th and 35th chapters. And in the 36th chapter, God's merciful dealing with the people of the Jews is so set forth, as to be fit to affect and terrify the unrepenting sinner.

In the Book of EZRA.

The confession in the 9th chapter is very exemplary.

In the Book of NEHEMIAH.

The religious manner of reading and hearing the law is, in the 8th chapter, ver. 5 and 6, particularly described. And, in the 9th chapter, there is a great variety of extraordinary providences, as in particular a short history of God's dealings with the Israelites, and of the unworthy return they made him, in breaking his commands.

In the Book of JOB.

You should more frequently read the 1st, 2d, 14th, 19th, 23d, 27th, 31st, 32d, and 42d chapters.

In the Book of PSALMS.

Upon all *penitential* occasions read one or more of the following psalms, *viz.* the 1st, the 4th, 8th, 18th, 19th, 22d, 25th, 34th, 36th, 37th, the 50th, 73d, 84th, 90th, 91st, 103d, 107th, 118th, 119th, 146th. Note, the 6th, 32d, 38th, 51st, 102d, 130th, 143d, are called the seven penitential Psalms, in a more particular manner.

In the Book of PROVERBS.

On divers occasions read the 1st, 3d, 6th, 11th, 15th, 22d, 23d, 24th, 27th, 28th, 29th, and 31st chapters; in which last, you have the description of a good wife, who is a great blessing to her husband, her family, her neighbours, and well deserves meditation.

In the Book of ECCLESIASTES.

You are taught by the 1st and 2d chapters to understand the world, and discern it's vanities. The 12th chapter contains such important truths and duties, as it will be the happiness of young and old effectually to remember them.

In the Prophet ISAIAH.

In the 1st, 5th, and 11th chapters, read the history of the defeat of Sennacherib; of the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, in the 36th and following chapters; the account of God's love for, and his care of the church, in the 49th; the reasonableness of trusting in him, in the 51st; at the 12th and 13th verses of which, you find these words: "I, even I am he that comfort-
"eth you, &c." More especially read the 53d chapter of this prophecy frequently and seriously; and ponder it in your heart.

In the Prophet JEREMIAH.

Read the 5th chapter, particularly verse 22. "Fear ye not me saith the Lord, &c." Read also the 17th, 18th, 31st chapters: in the 31st and following verses of which last, you find a large and excellent account of that new covenant referred to in the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews: and chapter 35, where the great example of obedience in the Rechabites is proposed for our instruction. From the 52d chapter, by the terrible sufferings of king Zedekiah, the greatest of men may learn to stand in awe of God, to be humble, and moderate, and under a constant sense of the uncertainty of the enjoyments of this world; as also from king Jehoiakim's advancement in the 37th year of his captivity, not to despond, much less to despair, upon the long continuance of misfortunes or afflictions.

In the LAMENTATIONS.

Read the 3d chapter in time of calamity.

In the prophet EZEKIEL.

Read the 3d, the 11th, 18th, 33d, and 36th chapters.

In the Prophet DANIEL.

Read the 3d, the 4th, the 5th, the 6th, and 12th chapters, which discover God's wisdom, power, goodness and justice, in the transactions of his providence and rule over us.

In the Prophet JONAH.

There is enough to make the disobedient tremble, and the penitent hope, under the most terrible denunciations of judgment, which you read at large in the 2d chapter, particularly at the 2d verse; and of the prevalence of sincere and general repentance, the last verse of the 3d chapter affords an example always to be remembered.

In the Prophet MICAH.

Read the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters. And,

In the Prophet HABAKKUK.

Read the 2d chapter, particularly the 15th and 16th verses against provoking to immoderate drinking; and the 17th and 18th verses of the 3d chapter, which excite to trust in God in the most unfavourable circumstances, call for our attention at all times.

In the Prophet HAGGAI.

Read the 2d chapter, where, at the 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, you have an illustrious prophecy of our Lord's coming in the time of the second temple.

In the Prophet ZECHARIAH.

Read the 5th, 12th, and 13th chapters.

In the Prophet MALACHI.

Read the 3d chapter, at the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses, which shew how religion was exercised in the former ages of the world, what acceptance and what encouragement it met with from God, and what satisfaction we shall find at last.

The NEW TESTAMENT.

In the Gospel of St. MATTHEW.

The 1st chapter relates the history of our Lord's birth; in the 5th, 6th, and 7th, you have his sermon on the mount; in the 25th, the account of the last judgment; in the 26th and 27th, our Lord's passion; and of the first institution of the sacrament of his last supper; and in the 28th, his glorious resurrection from the dead.

In the Gospel of St. MARK.

In the 6th chapter, at the 20th verse, you have an excellent character of St. John the baptist; at the 26th you have an excellent account of the value Herod had for him; in the 27th, &c. his sufferings are particularly described.

In the Gospel of St. LUKE.

In the 1st chapter you have a further account of John the baptist at *ver.* 5th and 57th, &c. as also, at *ver.* 26th, a relation of the notice the blessed virgin had from God, by the angel Gabriel, that she was to be the mother of our Lord; and, at *ver.* 38th, of the

the humble manner in which she received the divine message.—In the 2d chapter, *ver.* 6, &c. you have the most comfortable proclamations of our Lord's birth, by a heavenly herald, and the celebration of it by the heavenly host.—In the 4th chapter, from the 1st to the 14th verse you read the victory our Lord obtain'd, by the sword of the spirit, over the great enemy of mankind.—The 15th chapter presents you with the misery the prodigal son's wickedness brought him to; the happy course he resolved upon and took, and the reception he met with from his father; to the great encouragement of all truly penitent sinners, that come unto God through Christ.—In the 16th chapter, the history of Dives and Lazarus teaches, while you have opportunity, to take care you come not to that place of torment, where there is no relief to be had, and from whence there is no removal.—You have the penitent thief's request at the 40th, &c. verses of the 23d chapter; and our Saviour's most encouraging answer to that petition, admirable for the FAITH that appears in it, is a matter of greatest comfort for the returning and sincerely repenting sinner.

In the Gospel of St. JOHN.

Read often the 1st, 3d, 5th, 6th and 11th chapters; in the 11th particularly the history of the resurrection of Lazarus is fitted to confirm your Faith, and encourage the hope of your resurrection. Also read the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 17th chapters; in the last of which, you have our Lord's divine prayer for his disciples and other christians, and especially for unity. Read, in the 21st chapter, the proof our Lord required of St. Peter's love to him: the feeding of his lambs and sheep, deserves to be considered in a more especial manner by those, whose office requires it of them.

In the Acts of the APOSTLES.

Read the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters, which give an account of the primitive church; the way of living in it, after admission into it by baptism; the manner in which God appeared for it; of the actions and sufferings of the apostles; and of the first martyr St. Stephen, who was stoned to death.—In the 10th chapter you have the character and example of Cornelius, the special notice God took of his prayers and alms, and an account of his conversion to christianity, by the ministry of St. Peter the apostle.—In the 11th chapter, you read St. Peter's apology for himself, after he had preached to the Gentiles; the mission of Barnabas, his character and success, and an example of primitive charity.—In the 12th chapter, you read the death of St. James; the wonderful deliverance of St. Peter, upon the prayers of the Church; and the remarkable death of Herod the persecutor, who was eaten to death with worms.—In the 16th chapter, read the sufferings of St. Paul and Silas, with the occasion of them, and the comfortable manner in which they underwent them; whose deliverance, and the jailor of Philippi's conversion, will always be a great entertainment to pious Christians.

—In the 17th chapter, at the 22d verse, you have St. Paul's sermon in the Areopagus at Athens, about the worship of the true God and the day of judgment; and in chapter 20th, ver. 17. his discourse at Miletus to the elders of the church: these well deserve to be constantly before the eyes of the *clergy* as well as *laity*.—In the 24th chapter, you have St. Paul's discourse before Felix, the account he gives of his *faith, hope* and *practice*; and in the 26th chapter, his apology before king Agrippa, with a relation of his miraculous conversion, and the design upon which he was sent to the Gentiles: these are worthy of the most serious consideration. —In the 27th chapter, you read the preservation and deliverance of St. Paul and of those that sailed with him upon his account: this will much encourage christians to a dependence upon God, in the greatest difficulties and dangers of this mortal life.

In the Epistle of St. Paul to the ROMANS.

Read the *first* chapter, but more especially the 4th verse, concerning our Lord's resurrection; and the 20th, concerning the knowledge of God, by the *light of nature*; read the 8th chapter, concerning the influence and assistance of the Holy Spirit, the death, resurrection, and intercession of our Lord. In the 12th chapter you have a great variety of christian duties briefly enumerated, and easily to be remembered; in the 13th you have the great and necessary duty of *subjection* to the higher powers, which not only for wrath, but for conscience sake, is more especially required, *as also*, that love which is the fulfilling of the law.

In the *first* Epistle of St. Paul to the CORINTHIANS.

You must particularly regard the 1st, the 2d, the 3d, and 6th chapters; also the 16th verse of the 10th chapter, concerning the Sacrament of our *Lord's Supper*; and the 31st, about doing all to God's glory; in the 11th chapter you have the institution of that holy Sacrament; our duty to prepare for receiving it, by examining ourselves, and the danger of receiving it unworthily: these ought to be frequently perused by every christian.—Read the 13th chapter, in which you have an account of the necessity and excellent properties of charity; in the 15th chapter you have the proofs of the resurrection from the dead, and the account of the manner in which our bodies shall be raised; and the influence this doctrine of the resurrection ought to have upon us, at the last verse, requires our most serious consideration.

In the *second* Epistle to the CORINTHIANS.

The 4th, 5th, and 10th chapters treat of eternal things; of the last judgment, and the new creature; and of reconciliation to God, through Christ. And the 3d, 4th, and 5th verses of the 10th chapter describe our spiritual warfare and armour, and the effects of it, in a very extraordinary manner.

In the Epistle to the GALATIANS.

You should diligently read the 20th verse of the 2d chapter, concerning the apostle's being crucified with Christ, and yet living;

living; the latter part of the 5th chapter, where the works of the flesh, and the fruits of the Spirit, are reckoned up; and in the 6th chapter, the 10 first verses, where are many choice exhortations to virtue.

In the Epistle to the EPHESIANS.

You should read the 5th and 6th chapters; in which you have a short view of the *relative duties* of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. Read also the 6th chapter, which supplies you with a relation of that whole armour which every good christian stands in need of, to stand against the wiles of the devil, in the time of temptation.

The Epistle to the PHILIPPIANS.

This whole epistle is full of good counsel, and ought to be frequently read by the devout christian.

In the Epistle to the COLOSSIANS

The 3d and 4th chapters agree with the 5th and 6th chapters of the epistle to the Ephesians, as to *relative duties*; and the 3d chapter affords you much encouragement to read it as to other particulars, from the 1st to the 18th verse; where the account of *relative duties* begins, and is continued to the 2d verse of the chapter following.

In the *first* Epistle to the THESSALONIANS.

At the 13th verse there is a discourse concerning death under the notion of sleep; and of our Lord's second coming, and the manner of it, continued in the 5th chapter; followed by many exhortations to *christian duties*, and a proper prayer.

The Epistles to TIMOTHY and TITUS.

Are in an especial manner recommended to the reading of the clergy; who may in these epistles see their duty, with reference to doctrine and life; to themselves and their families; to the worship of God, ecclesiastical government, and the discipline of the church.

The Epistle to PHILEMON.

In this epistle you have an affectionate address to him from St. Paul; recommending Onesimus, whom, of an unprofitable servant, conversion to the christian religion had made useful to his master, and to the apostle in his ministry.

The Epistle to the HEBREWS.

In the 1st chapter, you are taught the divine excellency of our Lord; who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. In the 4th and the 6th chapters there are many excellent things; and the 8th, the 9th, and 10th chapters explain the new covenant, and the blessed Mediator of it. In the 11th chapter you are encouraged to the exercise of faith by the great things it hath done. In the 12th chapter you have an exhortation to patience, from the example of our Lord; where the advantages of affliction, and the necessity of peace and holiness, are set before you, and particularly call for your attention.

The Epistle of St. JAMES.

In this epistle are many remarkables about joy under afflictions; living suitably to our profession; joining works with faith; concerning the tongue, and it's government; the uncertainty of the world; behaviour in sickness and affliction; besides much of instruction from the examples of Job and Elias the prophet.

The *first* Epistle of St. PETER.

The apostle treats in the 1st chapter of the heavenly inheritance, and of the holiness that must fit us for it. And the 2d chapter lays down our duty to the king, as supreme; and unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him; and to all men and christians. In the 5th chapter is a special address to the clergy; and it gives the best motives to persuade them to their duty, from the promise of that crown of glory which fadeth not away.

The *second* Epistle of St. PETER.

In the 1st chapter, the golden chain of graces, to be added to one another for the compleating a christian; in the 2d chapter, the examples of God's justice, and of his mercy; in the 3d chapter, the end of all things, and the use to be made of it, well deserve to be often read and considered by every good christian.

The *third* Epistle of St. JOHN.

In the 1st chapter you have the illustrious testimony given to the christian religion, and the denial of sinless perfection. In the 2d chapter, the account of our advocate with the Father; of the world, and of the danger of loving it. In the 3d chapter, the love of God to us, and the love we ought to have for one another; of both which more in the 4th chapter. And, in the 5th chapter, the means of obtaining victory over the world, and the great doctrine of the *Three that bear record in heaven*; in whose name, or into the acknowledgment of whom, we are baptized.

The Epistle of St. JUDE.

This agrees with the *second* epistle of St. Peter; and, besides the terrible examples of God's wrath, it has that ancient prophecy of Enoch concerning the day of judgment, which is fitted to awaken the most secure and careless sinners to a thorough repentance.

The REVELATION of St. JOHN.

The first chapter, which describes our Lord's coming; the epistles to the seven churches, in the 2d and 3d chapters; the 20th chapter, where you have the account of the day of judgment, of the punishment of the wicked, and of the glorious reward of good men and christians, which follows; are all comfortable lessons for the virtuous, and awakening instructions for the wicked and evil-doers.

Having thus set down some of the most instructing parts of holy writ, before I conclude, I shall add a word or two by way of

of caution to those that read the scriptures, viz. Let no one imagine that *the scripture is a book of moralities*; or think he does enough, when, by his own strength, he endeavours to live up to the same. This, God knows, is too much the *mistake* of many, otherwise sincere christians, has contributed too much in lessening the great end, and is a *dangerous* method of reading those sacred books; which teach us, that *the way to ETERNAL LIFE* is through FAITH in CHRIST: Whereas, a reader, that turns the scripture into a book of *moralities* (or ventures his salvation on any book that treateth *only of moral Duties*) is not ever like to gain a true insight into the *fall of man*, and his *recovery* by *Jesus Christ*. For, as he hath but a slight knowledge of the various diseases of man's soul, it cannot be expected he should bear any great regard to JESUS CHRIST, the restorer of nature. Such a one is apt to think a little good *education* and *conversation* will fashion him into a *very good man*, and quite take off what may seem rude and unmannerly in him. The whole of his religion is too much adapted to the taste of the world: And as he squares his actions by a set of shining moralities, and refrains from the visible pollutions of the world; so he will be apt to raise his own esteem on the vileness of those that openly wallow in the mire of corruption. To remedy this disorderly way of reading, a man ought well to consider the principal END for which the scripture is indited. The scripture is written, not so much to *make us externally good and sober*, as to make us BELIEVE, that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*; and that *believing we might have life through his name*. * Or, as St. Paul expresseth it, The scripture is to *make us wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Jesus Christ, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works* †. This FAITH in Christ is attended with many marvellous changes upon the mind. It is on man's side the first and original principle from whence abundance of heavenly operations do proceed. It removeth the soul out of the accursed stock of nature, and transplants her into *Jesus Christ*, as a branch into the true vine. By *faith* a man is made a new creature; and this enduing him with a willing, free, and filial spirit, his works are thereby rendered acceptable to God; since they proceed no longer from *nature*, but from *grace*, the leading principle of a christian's life and actions. In a word; The *death and resurrection* of Christ are the great springs whence all *christian morals* do constantly flow. Since therefore *Jesus Christ* is the end and scope of the divine scriptures, and our only Saviour, all our reading ought to be resolved into him, and into those effects that proceed from a just application of his *death and merits*.

* John xx. 21. † 2 Tim. iii. 15 & 17.

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F I N I S.

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